

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Ethics in doctorate research: A journey through research paradigms

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**ABSTRACT** - This study aims to explore the ethical research elements that doctorate students need to comply with in their research journey. This study will elucidate five philosophical paradigms in management research which are, positivism, critical realism, post modernism, interpretivism, and pragmatism. Examining critical aspects of positivism, critical realism, postmodernism, interpretivism, and pragmatism involved reviewing information from publications as part of the contextual analysis process. The research findings show there are five paradigm shifts in Business management studies and each of the paradigm have their uniqueness which assist the doctoral study to adopt and adapt the ethical research value their research process. The implication of this study will enhance the mastery of knowledge about the research paradigms. Hence, the doctorate students may have proper guideline in bring out their research ideas until research discussion with a well direction. Research paradigms known as the best research procedures to use when doing research in each of the paradigms under discussion were identified, along with suggested solutions to obstacles in this regard. It was recommended that prospective researchers be provided with suitable direction on selecting research paradigms for doctoral studies that comply with ethical standards. The research paradigm as one of the ways to comprehend the clear whole research direction including research design, research methodology, statistical analysis and etc.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Doctoral research is the pinnacle of academic study, showcasing a profound commitment to advancing knowledge and enhancing human comprehension. Utilising a research paradigm is usually essential in behavioural research to enhance the study's credibility and applicability (Kankam, 2019). Scholars employ paradigms in various ways based on their preferences and the specific topic they are studying. Choosing a research study's paradigm is essential as it establishes the framework for the research designs and methodologies employed (*Management Research: An Introduction*, 2002). A paradigm analyses the comprehension and exploration of knowledge while also setting the objective, motivating factor, and anticipated outcomes of the research (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Therefore, setting ethical criteria based on the study paradigm is a crucial requirement at the centre of this research project. Each paradigm provides unique perspectives on the definition of meaning, requires specific methodological approaches, and offers different ways of asserting knowledge (Østern et al., 2023). The research paradigm for ethical behaviour is fundamental to doctoral studies as it forms the foundation for trustworthy and impactful research. Detailed descriptions of research paradigms are essential as they dictate how problems are addressed (Brown & Dueñas, 2020).

Thomas Kuhn first presented the concept of paradigm in his influential work, "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions" in 1962. A philosophical way to thinking is referred to as a paradigm (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Predictions, conceptions, beliefs, and behaviours are elements of a paradigm. A paradigm is a framework for understanding reality that includes assumptions, ideas, attitudes, and behaviours. (Saunders & Thornhill, 2009) favour the term "philosophy" above "paradigm." Philosophy is defined as the researcher's viewpoint or guiding assumptions for the investigation. The research's objectives, motivation, and anticipated outcomes are determined by the choice of paradigm. A paradigm represents the philosophical perspective, mindset, cognitive approach, intellectual tradition, or collective beliefs of a researcher that shape the study questions, methodology, and interpretation of results. Thus, without adopting a paradigm initially, there is no foundation for determining decisions regarding technique, design, and approach later on (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Various paradigms have been examined in the literature, although authors and researchers have not been able to agree on the appropriate amount of standards for social science research (Okesina, 2020). A paradigm consists of four components: ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

A comprehensive investigation of the practical uses of ethical decision-making in PhD research is needed to close this gap. Recent studies (Xu et al., 2019) have pointed out a lack of understanding of the ontological, epistemological, and methodological research paradigm and its applications in the field of study. It is crucial to investigate the real-life experiences of researchers facing ethical difficulties in their investigations, despite the existing frameworks offering theoretical support. Comprehending the adoption and adaption of research paradigms in studies is essential from both a theoretical and practical perspective (Hölbl et al., 2018; Yli-Huumo et al., 2016). Scholars can develop effective strategies to navigate ethical dilemmas and promote a culture of conscientious behaviour within the scholarly community by

highlighting the practical dimensions of these issues. This comprehensive approach improves academic discussions on ethics and provides researchers with the tools to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and honesty in their work. A comprehensive investigation of the practical uses of ethical decision-making in PhD research is required to bridge this gap. Recent studies (Xu et al., 2019) have pointed out a lack of understanding of the ontological, epistemological, and methodological research paradigm and its applications in the field of study. It is crucial to investigate the real-life experiences of researchers facing ethical difficulties in their investigations, despite the existing frameworks offering theoretical support. It is important to comprehend how research paradigms are adopted and adapted in studies for both theoretical and practical reasons (Hölbl et al., 2018; Yli-Huumo et al., 2016). Scholars can develop effective strategies to navigate ethical dilemmas and promote a culture of conscientious behaviour in the scholarly community by highlighting the practical dimensions of these issues. This comprehensive approach not only improves academic discussions on ethics but also provides researchers with the tools to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and honesty in their work.

Upholding ethical norms in doctoral research is crucial and essential (Johnson et al., 2020). It is a critical element of scholarly integrity, fostering an environment of diligent academic pursuit and ethical responsibility that is essential for the advancement of knowledge and the improvement of societal well-being (Drolet et al., 2023). By strictly following ethical principles and methods, researchers uphold the values of their area and contribute significantly to promoting the common good by ensuring that their work benefits the public and supports community well-being.

## **2. ISSUES IN UNDERSTANDING RESEARCH PARADIGM BY DOCTORATE RESEARCH STUDENTS RELATED WORK**

Research literature indicates that early career researchers and students often lack clarity on how to effectively utilise research paradigms. However, there is a significant gap in the current academic discourse concerning the necessity for a more advanced examination of the practical challenges that PhD students have when dealing with complex ethical judgements in an applied research context. Moreover, as stated by (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017), the confusion arises from the different interpretations of the term "paradigm" in daily language compared to its specific use in educational research. There is clear dispute on the definitions, outlines, and applicability of the accepted paradigm. Academic study utilises the concept and explanations of "paradigm" in various ways. Many academics have researched the reasons for and uses of research paradigms to help researchers better understand how to apply them correctly. A discipline-specific approach is necessary for the paradigm discussion because of the varied applications of research paradigms. This approach should provide guidance for researchers using paradigms in their respective fields of study or professions. This study attempted to incorporate a paradigm discussion into the research, particularly in doctoral studies.

## **3. RESEARCH PARADIGM ELEMENTS**

Researchers (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) have proposed many paradigm components. This paper analyses three components of a paradigm: methodology, ontology, and epistemology. The primary focus in research development is the earliest steps included in the study procedure. Researchers can freely choose the ontological, epistemological, or methodological stage from which to start. Some argue that establishing researchers' ontological assumptions in advance is the optimal approach to conducting research. Establishing a coherent relationship among a researcher's ontological assumptions, methodological approach, and epistemological assumptions is crucial for effective research. Researchers can begin to comprehend how their ontological position can impact their choice of research topics and methods (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). The methodological approach, encompassing the design and tools for data collection, is based on ontological assumptions that influence researchers' epistemological assumptions and methodology. The fundamentals, such as method selection, are philosophical presumptions that encompass axiology, ontology, epistemology, and methodology, emphasising direct thinking and action conceptions (Mertens, 2019).

The initial step in constructing an organization's model is axiology, which focuses on the examination of ethics and values (Biedenbach & Jacobsson, 2016). Once a valuable study topic has been identified and research ethics have been considered, it is important to take into account ontology, which delves into the "nature of reality" (Bunniss & Kelly, 2010). Epistemology in a work involves recognising how knowledge is understood within the context of your research field once you have a strong philosophical understanding of it. Understanding the fundamental nature and theory of work enables the selection of the most effective methodological approach and resolves any ambiguity in result interpretation (Weaver & Olson, 2006). Methodology is concerned with obtaining knowledge about the subject being studied. This article will detail many elements to consider while selecting the appropriate research paradigm. The initial step in constructing an organization's model is axiology, which focuses on the study of ethics and values (Biedenbach & Jacobsson, 2016). After selecting a valuable study topic and considering research ethics, ontology, which investigates "the nature of reality," must be considered (Bunniss & Kelly, 2010). Epistemology in a work involves recognising how knowledge is understood within the context of your research field once you have a strong philosophical understanding of it. The study of the nature of work and knowledge can help in selecting the most effective methodological approach and resolving any ambiguity in result interpretation (Weaver & Olson, 2006). Methodology is concerned with obtaining knowledge about the subject being studied. This article will detail many elements to consider while selecting the appropriate research paradigm.

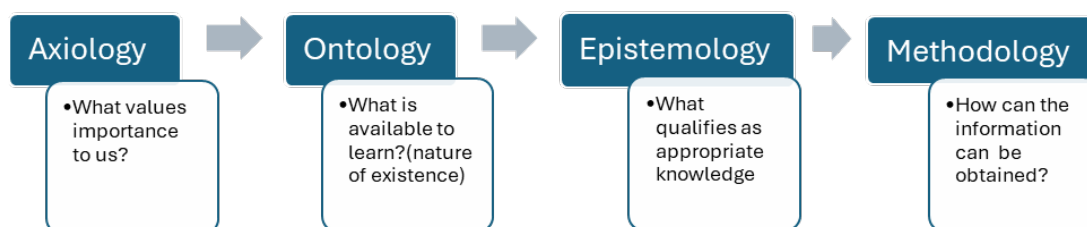


Figure 1. Research paradigm formed and interrelated process

### 3.1 Axiology

A trend has occurred towards including axiology as a fourth defining element of paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Axiology in a field of study addresses questions of what should be and includes ethical considerations. It is essential to begin each planned study at this point as it determines the type of research that would be beneficial (Patterson & Williams, 1998). This pertains to ethical dilemmas and the influence of values on research. Therefore, it is called value theory. This entails identifying, assessing, and comprehending notions of appropriate and inappropriate conduct in the study (Khatri, 2020). (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017) identified three categories of axiology approaches: value-neutral, value-laden, and balanced; value-driven: and value-laden, biased, and culture-sensitive. Findings must be analysed using a value-neutral axiology to separate objective facts from the researcher's personal biases and opinions. Research should be conducted objectively, without considering the importance of the facts, and in a value-neutral way. (Nguyen & Rozsa, 2019) stated that producing a report that is both value-laden and balanced necessitates the researcher to account for participant and personal biases. Research is considered value-bound due to being conducted by subjective individuals, necessitating the consideration of their subjectivities. Axiology that is value-laden, biased, and culturally sensitive inherently contains bias, which the researcher must recognise and respect cultural norms (Saunders et al., 2019).

### 3.2 Ontology

The nature of the social problem being examined and the perspective through which the world is viewed are not elements of an ontology research paradigm. Ontology is the study of philosophical assumptions regarding the nature of existence and reality. The idea of reality is a commonly referenced concept in research studies (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Makombe, 2017; Saunders & Thornhill, 2009; Scotland, 2012). Ontology is essential to scholars because it helps them understand the elements that make up the world. The initial reality is singular. The scholar's sense perceptions are based on an external, objective, and socially independent universe of material objects (Fard, 2012). Relativist ontology suggests that research problems have several realities that researchers can explore and interpret by engaging with study participants. The third type is historical realism, which delves into past instances of political, social, and economic oppression in order to promote social justice and liberation (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The non-singular reality ontology argues that there is no single accurate method to comprehend reality and human behaviour. It encourages a practical method for understanding human conduct, often known as mixed-orientation or worldview (Makombe, 2017).

### 3.3 Epistemology

The epistemology of a research paradigm pertains to our understanding of concepts like reality and truth (Nguyen & Rozsa, 2019). Put simply, it explains how a researcher acquires information, the knowledge they have, and how they share that knowledge to enhance understanding in a certain field of study. The most common epistemological viewpoints are relational, transactional/subjective, subjective, and objective. Firstly, data can be collected independently by the researcher without involving participants in the research through a specific school of thinking and objective epistemology (Creswell, 2014). Subjective epistemology involves collaborative work amongst researchers to develop knowledge based on their own experiences and interactions with other researchers (Fard, 2012). Transactional epistemology, like subjective epistemology, requires researchers to delve further into participants' opinions. When tackling important social topics such as inequality, empowerment, dominance, and oppression, the researcher needs to interact with participants to have a deep understanding of the phenomenon. Relational epistemology emphasises that the researcher's interactions with research participants are crucial to the study, focusing on the research questions and the researcher's judgement (Saunders & Thornhill, 2009).

### 3.4 Methodology

A research paradigm lacking methodology is inadequate. It focuses on the specific steps of the investigative process. (Khatri, 2020) defines methodology as a theoretical framework that outlines the procedures for conducting research. The statement encompasses the theoretical and philosophical beliefs that drive research, together with the impact of these beliefs on the procedures or methodologies utilised. The theoretical approach we adopt influences the methodology, which serves as the research's frame of reference (Saunders et al., 2019). (Nguyen & Rozsa, 2019) defines methodology as the comprehensive research strategy that encompasses the literature, theoretical framework, paradigm, and ethical standards. The methodology encompasses research approaches, procedures, tactics, and paradigms. Put simply, there is a relationship between paradigm and methodology, as well as methodology and method. Methodology refers to the processes or techniques utilised for systematic data gathering and analysis (Okesina, 2020). Novice researchers often mistakenly use technique and methods interchangeably, but they should be viewed as distinct categories (Wahyuni, 2012).

Methods refer to the specific techniques employed to gather and analyse data, whereas methodology pertains to the overall strategy or framework for obtaining information (Scotland, 2012).

#### 4. CLASSIFICATIONS OF RESEARCH PARADIGM (PARADIGM SHIFT)

Various paradigms have been explored in the literature, but authors and researchers do not reach a consensus on the appropriate number of standards for social science research. Several authors and researchers have identified three study paradigms. The three primary schools of thinking are positivism, constructivism/interpretivism, and critical theory/paradigm according to (Fuyane, 2021). (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) identified four paradigms: constructivism, post-positivism, positivism, and critical paradigm. (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006) suggest a classification system consisting of four types: positivist/post-positivist, pragmatic, transformational, and interpretive/constructivist techniques. Philosophical paradigms encompass positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, post-modernism, and pragmatism as outlined by (Saunders & Thornhill, 2009). The text delves into the four basic paradigms or viewpoints utilised in social science research, emphasising their distinctive characteristics (Okesina, 2020). This study will explore the dominant paradigms in the existing body of business management literature. The theories include interpretivism, pragmatism, post-modernism, positivism, and critical realism.

##### 4.1 Positivism

The positivist paradigm is seen as a scientific approach to study, grounded in a rationalistic and empiricist philosophy (Scotland, 2012). Auguste Comte popularised positivism as a philosophy that emphasises reasoning and observation for understanding human behaviour and considers humans as subjects that can be scientifically investigated. (Mertens, 2019) asserts a significant correlation with Aristotle, Francis Bacon, John Locke, and Auguste Comte. The terms theory-driven and evidence-driven are interchangeable to describe it. Positivists at the ontological level accept naive realism, which asserts that reality is measurable, objective, and easily quantifiable through processes that are independent of the researcher and their devices (Fard, 2012).

Scientific processes emphasise causal explanations and predictions as contributions to knowledge, which are law-like generalisations from an epistemological standpoint. Optimistic individuals generally believe that what is observable accurately reflects reality or the world. Emphasising data gathering is important because of the significant relevance of quantitative data and information (Saunders et al., 2019). According to (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020), positivists believe that research is independent of context and values, and they assume that researchers remain objective in their study of values. Research technique pertains to the systematic processes used to perform research. These methods encompass sampling strategies, research design, data collection, and analytical procedures. Positivism is a method that aims to uncover, clarify, and forecast the relationships between variables by focusing on answering "what" questions (Irshaidat, 2019). Quantitative methods, such as statistical hypothesis testing, are used in positivist paradigms according to (Laumann, 2020). Quantitative procedures, such as statistical hypothesis testing, are used in positivist paradigms. Post-positivism suggests that it is challenging or even impossible to conclusively determine if a genuine reality has been identified, despite assuming the existence of reality. An objective reality can be achieved by "probable knowledge" according to this viewpoint.

##### 4.2 Critical Realism

Critical realism is a philosophical approach that seeks to elucidate human experiences and observations by considering the fundamental structures of reality that impact the observed phenomena (Saunders et al., 2019). Critical realism, based on the contributions of prominent thinkers such as Roy Bhaskar and Margaret Archer, has been effectively utilised in various disciplines such as business management, discourse analysis, economics, education, environmental science, law, philosophy of science, religion and theology, and sociology (Walker, 2017). Esteemed scholars have advanced and enhanced critical realism beyond Bhaskar, often challenging his ideas and expanding upon the original framework. Critical realism has gained significance in contemporary social research due to the contributions of several scholars such as (Archer et al., 1998) and (Porpora, 2015) in sociology, (Lawson, 2003) in economics, (Collier, 1994) in philosophy, and (Sayer, 1992) in methodology. Recently, critical realism has been used to back the research of (Scrambler, 2007) on health and illness, (Vass, 2010) on social structure theories, (Bailey, 2009) on social democracy, and (Brock & Carrigan, 2014) on the causal explanation of protest activism. Bhaskar's critical realism and other realist philosophy emphasise the growing popularity of the Realist Evaluation approach (Pawson, 2013). This approach is utilised to evaluate policy initiatives and interventions in complex real-world settings (Greenhalgh et al., 2014; Wong et al., 2017). Critical realists consider a well-structured and multi-layered ontology crucial as they prioritise reality as the most important philosophical issue.

According to critical realists, reality is external, autonomous, and not directly accessible through human understanding and observation. Various methods can be used to develop the basic argument for critical realism. The study focuses on the experimental natural sciences to create a logical explanation of scientific discoveries and advancement. The primary focus of A Realist Theory of Science was this (Bhaskar, 2020). Perceiving reality according to critical realism (CR) comprises two phases, as stated by (Sayer, 1997). Initially, responders experience certain emotions and events. Secondly, there is a cognitive process that occurs after the experience, where we analyse our sensations to understand the underlying

truth that caused them. Critical realists use the term "retroduction" to describe the abductive process (Price & Martin, 2018).

The primary objective of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods in consumer research is to enhance understanding of the aspects that influence the complexity of reality, rather than simply translating it. Simply put, Critical Realism suggests that detailed explanations of the underlying mechanisms in a phenomenon can be achieved through qualitative methods. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, can be employed to assess the characteristics and intensity of these mechanisms when a deeper comprehension of the situation is required to modify and influence these mechanisms. A comprehensive comprehension of the structures that generate events is essential for a genuine understanding of the social world. Therefore, thorough "ontological" research on the authentic, concealed generative structures should be conducted alongside empirical investigations of the observable world (Zhang, 2023).

### 4.3 Post Modernism

Postmodernism emerged in the mid-20th century in post-war Europe as numerous thinkers and artists began to question and critique modernist ideologies and behaviours. The French philosophers Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and Jean Baudrillard are intimately linked to postmodernism. Postmodernism encompasses several ideologies, methodologies, models, and viewpoints that are generally critical and sceptical in their approach to thinking and doing, rather than forming a unified school of thought or practice (Saunders et al., 2019). Postmodernism is founded on the concept that power and its various connotations, manipulations, and ideologies shape our actions and perspectives on the world. This involves analysing these realities as if they were texts to identify unexplored elements like absences and silences overlooked in these widely accepted truths, as well as any inconsistencies within them (Derrida, 2016).

Postmodernism refers to a distinct historical era that emphasises the importance of language and power dynamics in questioning traditional beliefs and expressing marginalised perspectives. Recognising that the power dynamics between the researcher and study subjects impact the knowledge generated throughout the research process is crucial in postmodernist research. Researchers must be clear about their moral and ethical viewpoints due to the inevitability of power interactions (Calas & Smircich, 1997). Researchers should consciously strive to be highly introspective about their writing and thought processes (Cunliffe & Scaratti, 2017). Data in various forms such as texts, photographs, audio, chats, and numbers are typically analysed using qualitative analysis methodologies (Ellaway, 2020). A postmodernist researcher focuses on the ongoing processes of organising, managing, and ordering that create concepts like "management," "performance," and "resources," instead of considering the organisational world as consisting of fixed objects.

### 4.4 Interpretivism/Constructivist

Interpretivism, often known as the constructivist paradigm, is a way of conceptualising individuals and social phenomena (Fard, 2012). Max Weber, a German sociologist and a key figure in interpretivism, significantly impacted social theory by dismissing positivism and substituting scientific concepts with social philosophies to create meaning (Siddiqui, 2019). Relativism is the philosophical perspective that supports interpretivism. All information is subjective and can only be understood from the perspective of the one who has firsthand experience (Fard, 2012). The environment influences the actuality, and there are exchanges between the researcher and the subject (respondent) during acquiring knowledge (Nguyen & Rozsa, 2019). Within the interpretivism paradigm, the researcher acknowledges and takes into account their own values and biases, together with the significance of the field data, recognising that the study is influenced by values (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The interpretive method, based on qualitative methodologies, allows for a more profound comprehension of certain situations. Social interactions shape qualitative data, and an interpretive technique aims to derive deep insights and conclusions from this data that may be distinct from other types of data (Saunders et al., 2019).

### 4.5 Pragmatic Paradigm

William James introduced the term "pragmatism" in a public address in 1898. However, he acknowledged in the speech that Charles Sanders Pierce, who also borrowed the phrase from Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Critique of Pure Reason), was his main influence for pragmatic philosophy. Richard Rorty is acknowledged for popularising the word in 1979 by introducing it into the American research vocabulary. The term "pragma" in Greek, denoting activity, is the origin of the term "pragmatism" (Pansiri, 2005). Pragmatic philosophy posits that human actions are closely connected to past experiences and the beliefs derived from them. Action and cognition are closely connected in the human mind.

Individuals base their decisions on the possible results of their activities and use previous experiences to predict the outcomes of future actions in a similar manner (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). The pragmatic paradigm argues that understanding social reality and seeking knowledge cannot be achieved by adhering to just one paradigm orientation, as suggested by positivists and interpretivists (Okesina, 2020). Researchers propose employing diverse worldviews in research to tackle issues and advance knowledge, ultimately leading to the pragmatic paradigm (Alise & Teddlie, 2010). Research is encouraged under a paradigm that supports the idea of a non-singular reality ontology, where each individual has their own distinct interpretation of reality.

Table 1. Summary of five philosophical perspectives on research in the fields of business and management (Saunders et al., 2019)

	Positivism	Critical Realism	Post Modernism	Interpretivism	Pragmatism
Ontology (nature of existence)	The primary distinguishing component of the entity is its essence, which is obtained from external sources and can be comprehended through rigorous research. The essence of an entity is its real and independent nature, obtained from external sources and comprehended via careful investigation.	mix of real, actual, and empirical causal mechanisms, which explain how and why a hypothesised cause influences a specific outcome in a particular situation. Objective framework Objective structures constrain individuals' capacity to think, behave, and engage with others, influencing their perception of the surroundings.	Nominally complex (modifier), Social construct is a notion that emerges from human interaction rather than being inherent in an objective reality. Its existence is acknowledged by everybody, therefore it must exist. Through power dynamics in interpersonal communication, maintain alterations in procedures, situations, and approaches.	Complex, Ever-evolving in methodology, Social construct refers to ideas that are formed via human interaction rather than being inherent in an objective reality. Its existence is acknowledged by everybody, therefore it must exist. Utilising language and culture.	Complex, volatile (constantly changing technique and process), "Reality" refers to the practical implementation of the notion.
Epistemology (What qualifies as appropriate knowledge)	scientific methodology Measurable and visible data.	Epistemological relativism is the belief that information's relevance is dependent on a certain context, community, culture, or individual.	Valuable Truth and knowledge must align with the mainstream ideology, which represents the thoughts and beliefs of the majority in a specific group.	The theories and concepts are overly simplistic, focusing more on storytelling.	Application of knowledge in certain situations, Solving issues and guiding future procedures as an input, scientific theory can be test.
Axiology (Value function)	Objective research (The observation and interpretation can prevent bias).	Researchers aim to minimise prejudice and errors in both value-neutral and value-laden research, which are approaches or disciplines closely tied to personal ideals.	Researcher and research focused on power dynamics and research shaped by values. Research that examines and analyses how the human experience is depicted in writing is being silenced. Researcher and research focused on power dynamics and research influenced by values. Research that investigates and analyses how the human experience is portrayed in writing has been silenced.	The researcher is inherently intertwined with the subject of the investigation, making objectivity unattainable due to their involvement.	Researcher reflexivity involves examining one's own attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs during the study process to understand how they may have influenced the findings. value-driven research.
Methodology	Can be measured using logical reasoning and quantitative analytic approaches. Can be assessed using logical reasoning and quantitative analytical approaches.	Reproduction involves the process of uncovering the root causes of problems by examining recognised patterns or regularities through various methodologies.	Deconstructing involves analysing something to uncover its true meaning, especially the language used in a piece of literature or fiction. Qualitative methodology	Inductive reasoning and qualitative technique analysis (with a range that can be determined).	Adhere precisely to the research issues and research questions. Various methods include mixed, multiple, qualitative, quantitative, action research to achieve workable answers and results.

This paradigm also emphasises relational epistemology, suggesting that research relationships should be determined by the researcher's judgement for each study, and value-driven axiology, which acknowledges that each person has their own unique interpretation of reality (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Nguyen & Rozsa, 2019). (Creswell, 2014) prefers the phrase mixed-method research over the pragmatic paradigm. This paradigm emphasises outcomes and research subjects rather than methodologies. (Creswell & Plano, 2011) suggest that casual or formal rhetoric may be utilised.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH PARADIGM IN DOCTORAL THESES

Research paradigms should be embraced by PhD candidates as a source of guidance. Students can select the method that best fits their research issue by having a solid understanding of several paradigms, such as positivism or interpretivism. This clarity helps them choose methodologies such as surveys for positivism or interviews for interpretivism, strengthening their study design. It also ensures that their analytic methods extract significant insights from the data. study paradigms ultimately provide students the ability to carry out targeted study. This article explores the various impacts of research paradigms on doctoral theses. Paradigms are essential structures that impact every aspect of research, including methodological approaches, interpretations, and ontological and epistemological perspectives. The researcher's paradigm mirrors their inherent perspective on reality (ontology) and the method of acquiring knowledge (epistemology). This choice has a cascade effect. The evolution of the theoretical foundation is influenced by the chosen paradigm. It sets the structure and meaning of concepts inside a pre-established framework. The paradigm influences the selection of research methodologies in a methodological manner.

Various paradigmatic assumptions are upheld by approaches that employ mixed, qualitative, or quantitative methods. Furthermore, the paradigm impacts the techniques used to collect and analyse data. The study's overall precision, thoroughness, and comprehensiveness are influenced by the chosen method. The selected paradigm has broader implications that are evident in ethical issues, researcher introspection, and potential knowledge additions. Researchers must evaluate how their selection aligns with the prevailing research traditions in their field when managing disciplinary norms and expectations.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, choosing a research paradigm for a PhD thesis is a significant milestone that impacts the researcher's journey and the academic discourse. Paradigms incorporated in doctoral theses will advance as research procedures and knowledge production progress, especially in the field of business management.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s), as noted, certify that they have NO affiliations with or involvement in any organisation or agency with any financial interest (such as honoraria; educational grants; participation in speakers' bureaus; membership, jobs, consultancies, stock ownership, or other equity interest; and expert testimony or patent-licensing arrangements), or non-financial interest (such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, expertise or beliefs) in the subject matter or materials addressed in this manuscript.

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