

# Research Methods

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The cards will help you prepare for your viva by focusing on four areas:

- introductory context
- methods, design and analysis
- results and discussion
- implications and utilisation

How did you choose your methodology?

Were there any constraints?

How have you evaluated your work?

What are the theoretical underpinnings of your work?

Why did you select this sample? Were there any limitations to it?

Do you think the data collected were the most appropriate to answer your research questions?

How far do you think you can generalise your work?

Did you encounter any problems with applying your chosen method of analysis?

What are the theoretical implications of your findings?

## What is method?

Research methods are the tools and instruments that are used to gather data.

## What is methodology?

Research methodology is the theoretical analysis of research methods.

# Paradigms

A paradigm consists of;

An ***Ontology*** (a description of the nature of reality)

An ***Epistemology*** (what is knowable, and who can know it), and

A ***Methodology*** (how the knowledge is come by)

# Differences in Paradigms

- Positivism

- Deductive reasoning
- Scientific enquiry
- Generalisability
- Quantitative methods

- Post-Positivism

- Deductive reasoning
- Scientific and Naturalistic enquiry
- Qualitative methods

- Interpretivism

- Inductive reasoning
- Naturalistic enquiry
- Constructivism, ethnography, phenomenology
- Qualitative methods

- Critical Theory

- Naturalistic enquiry
- Post-colonialism, feminism, humanistic, indigenous
- Qualitative methods

# Research Activity

What is **your** research question?

**OR** if you don't have one, here is an example:

A higher than usual number of residents from the Sighthill area have been reported as seriously ill during the last two weeks ( $n=32$ ). You have been asked to design a research project that will show how and why these people have become unwell. Develop a research question.

Look at your research question, choose different methods and explore this from different paradigms. How does your design change?

# Resources

## Information

- SAGE Research Methods
- Research Skills Master Programme
- The Research Cycle
- National Centre for Research Methods
- Viva Cards

## Tools

- Novi Survey
- MATLAB
- Minitab
- NVIVO
- R & R Studio
- SAS
- SPSS
- Stata