

NURSE'S VOICE FROM THE FIELD

## Why Philosophical Foundations in Conducting Research?

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The quality of the research output is strengthened by the researcher's awareness of the paradigms and perspectives involved in conducting research. The approaches used by researchers are shaped by their worldviews, which include ideas and philosophical assumptions about the fundamental nature of the universe and the means by which it may be comprehended. The conceptual frameworks used to understand and analyze the world are often referred to as research paradigms, which play a crucial role in shaping the structure and implementation of research endeavors. A paradigm is a framework for understanding and interpreting the world that is shaped by philosophical beliefs regarding the fundamental nature of social reality (referred to as ontology), methods of acquiring knowledge (referred to as epistemology), and ethical principles and value systems (referred to as axiology). A paradigm, therefore, prompts us to generate particular questions and use appropriate strategies for systematic investigation, thereby addressing the question of how we ought to find out about the world.

Understanding paradigmatic assumptions may provide challenges due to the deeply embedded nature of our particular daily thinking patterns. For instance, we'll examine individuals' perspectives on the topic of abortion. For some individuals, abortion is seen as a medical intervention that should be conducted based on the personal judgment of each woman. The perception held by some individuals is that abortion is an act of murder, and it is suggested that the broader community should possess the collective authority to choose the circumstances under which abortion may be pursued, if at all. It is likely that individuals who have opinions on this subject matter possess a high level of confidence in the accuracy and validity of their own viewpoints. Conversely, some may possess a contrasting viewpoint but exhibit an equivalent level of certainty with the veracity of their position.

Each individual is working inside a framework of assumptions about the functioning of the world, or their own ideals of how the world ought to function. These assumptions may stem from their viewpoint on politics, which influences their stance on many social matters, or they may be derived from the teachings of their parents or religious institutions. Regardless, there exists a paradigm that influences one's perspective on the matter at hand. The aforementioned paradigms may be seen as a collection of underlying assumptions. It is possible for one's classmate to hold the belief that life starts from the moment of conception, so asserting that the ethical evaluation should primarily revolve around the life of the developing fetus. On the contrary, one may posit the viewpoint that the start of life occurs when the fetus reaches a stage of viability outside the maternal womb and that the decision-making power of the mother has more significance than the preservation of the fetus's existence. The choice of when life starts, the prioritization of interests, and the assessment of the choice's significance lack a definitive scientific methodology. These are just philosophical postulates or convictions. Therefore, the foundation of a pro-life worldview may be rooted, at least in part, in a belief in the existence of divine morality and the recognition of fetal rights. The pro-choice perspective is often grounded on the principle of a mother's autonomy and the idea that the benefits of abortion exceed the drawbacks. The aforementioned ideas and assumptions have a significant impact on our cognitive processes pertaining to all aspects of the matter at hand.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that a paradigm encompasses four fundamental components: epistemology, ontology, methodology, and axiology. A comprehensive understanding of these components is crucial since they constitute the fundamental assumptions, beliefs, norms, and values upheld

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by each paradigm. Hence, while situating your research plan inside a certain research paradigm, it is essential to acknowledge that your study will adhere to and be influenced by the underlying assumptions, beliefs, norms, and values associated with the selected paradigm. Hence, it is crucial to exhibit a comprehensive understanding of the significance of each of these components. Ontology is vital to a paradigm by reason of providing an understanding of the things that the world constitutes, as it is known (Scott & Usher 2004). Moreover, it allows for the testing of the underlying belief system and philosophical assumptions about the nature of being, existence, and reality. These assumptions are important to understanding how you make meaning of the data you gather. Epistemology, on the other hand, guides researchers in determining the level of trustworthiness attributed to the data, hence influencing the methods used to reveal knowledge within a given social context (Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A.B. 2017). In order to acquire an understanding of a research topic, the methodology clarifies the rationale and progression of the systematic procedure used in the investigation. When considering the methodology, it is essential to take into account the following inquiry: How should one go about acquiring the necessary facts, information, and comprehension that would facilitate the response to the research issue and therefore contribute to the advancement of knowledge (Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A.B. 2017)? Hence, it is valuable for the researcher to thoroughly examine the conceptual background, ontological, and epistemological aspects of the study in order to determine the methodology for answering the research question.

It is advantageous for researchers to ensure that their philosophical assumptions fit with their chosen technique and procedures in order to provide research outcomes of high quality. Furthermore, the techniques used for conducting research are of utmost importance as they provide the necessary information for the comprehensive advancement of scholarly investigations (Avgousti, 2013). In the first stages of the study, it is important for the researcher to carefully deliberate on strategies for effectively addressing the topic at hand while also critically examining the underlying philosophical assumptions that inform their approach. Furthermore, it is essential to examine the ontological and epistemological stance by posing the question: What knowledge may be acquired about the subject of concern? Which strategy should be used, and for what reason? The resolution to this inquiry may include a degree of rigidity, although it should also exhibit adaptability in order to accommodate diverse methodological approaches that are suitable for the examination of different research issues. Furthermore, it is essential to choose a suitable sampling methodology. Lastly, it is important to engage in reflection by

examining the impact of history, education, experiences, and worldviews on the research topics chosen and the techniques of data collection, analysis, and writing.

As a Ph.D. student in nursing, it is crucial to acquire knowledge about the philosophical foundations in order to ensure that study findings are relevant and accurately stated. The analysis of the differences and intersections across philosophical methodologies could bring about reflections on the extent of our knowledge, the acquisition of new knowledge, and the consequential impact of this knowledge on our decision-making processes and behaviors. Therefore, enhancing one's proficiency while improving the ability to make sound choices.

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