

A Researcher's Dilemma: Philosophy in Crafting Dissertations and Theses

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ABSTRACT The purpose of the present paper is to advance arguments that reflect on the researcher's dilemma caused by tendencies to conflate metatheory and paradigm in the crafting of dissertations and theses. Philosophy as an umbrella concept under which metatheory and paradigm are subsumed proves evasive in some social science dissertations and theses. Consequently, most novice researchers become confused by the conflated and unexplained use of these concepts in research. The researcher attempted to clarify philosophy, paradigm and metatheory as used in the social sciences in this paper. To this end, the paper demystified the use and relationship of research philosophy concepts normally found in dissertations and theses. This paper is primarily a theoretical exploration intended to guide beginning researchers on the scientific and scholarly use of the philosophy of research concepts in their dissertations and theses.