

Chapter 2: Epistemological bases for qualitative research

Essay questions

1. Define realist, phenomenological and social constructionist epistemological orientations. Highlight the ways in which these perspectives differ in their approach to research.
2. Compare and contrast realist and social constructionist perspectives in terms of their implications for data collection and analysis.
3. How does the interpretation of data vary depending on the epistemological position adopted by the researcher?
4. Discuss key steps and decisions that would help a researcher choose an appropriate research design.
5. Discuss some of the benefits and challenges of using 'methodological pluralism'