

# Review of: "Using concepts related to research design while writing thesis and dissertation at universities: questioning the status quo"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

As an important aspect of any form of academic work, the methodology that is used is crucial for understanding how the research was conducted. That information is needed to evaluate the research and to apply it to other research contexts. As the author of this paper states, the terms research design, methodology, methods, and others aligned with these concepts can be confusing. For graduate students who are beginning to conduct their research for the first time, they may indeed be uncertain as to what these terms mean and how they are to use them within their research. This concern, however, has been addressed in many academic programs, as well as in articles and book chapters.

As such, this article needs to bring to light a new perspective on this concern. As it is currently written, this new perspective is still missing. The author has presented definitions from several authors regarding these terms. Yet, nothing new is added. Reasons why graduate students need to understand these terms are missing. As a reader, I also am left confused as to how the implications presented are to help graduate students. If the goal of this paper is to help these graduate students understand the differences between these terms, as well as know when to use them, then that goal is unmet.

Addressing why this paper is important for graduate students needs to be clearer in the abstract and the introduction of the paper. Also, the way this paper is written it comes across to the reader that this issue occurs across disciplines. I am leery of anyone making that claim without detailed documentation. The author comes from a background in the field of education. The author should address this paper for either graduate students in education, or expand the literature review to cover all fields. This information needs to be included explicitly in the paper. Regardless of the audience, a more thorough literature review would prove beneficial either broadly across disciplines or within education.

What would prove useful, additionally, is for the author to diagram these terms in one or two tables to help differentiate them. Included in the table(s) would be information related to their definitions, purpose, when to use them, and how to use them. Because the terms are related to one another, blocks of text that refer to each of these terms are confusing and challenging to read.

While this topic is an important one to address for graduate students, as the article is written it is one that I feel is still in need of further development and should not be published. The author should strive to focus on the purpose of the article to make it more explicit. The article also would benefit from a more detailed literature review. The use of some organizational/visual design, such as the use of tables, would also help the reader.

Please find below two articles on related topics that might prove helpful in generating ideas on how to revise and edit this paper:

- Koro-Ljungberg, M., Yendol-Hoppey, D., Smith, J. J., & Hayes, S. B. (2009). (E)pistemological awareness, instantiation of methods, and uninformed methodological ambiguity in qualitative research projects. *Educational Researcher*, 38(9), 687–699. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X09351980>
- Smagorinsky, P. (2008). The method section as conceptual epicenter in constructing social science research reports. *Written Communication*, 25(3), 389–411. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088308317815>