

A Review of Dominant Ontology of Current Marketing Research - Towards Developing an Alternative Research Approach

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Abstract: This paper seeks to examine the ultimate presumptions (ontology) of the knowledge-creating enterprise in marketing - the marketing research - with a view to proposing alternative research approaches to dominant positivistic-based research tradition in marketing. Thus, the paper calls for a paradigm shift in research approaches from positivistic methodology to post-positivistic methodology requiring marketing researchers to look for alternative research approaches such as (1) case study research (2) grounded theory (3) anthropology and ethnography (4) action research (5) critical research.

It is argued that the general marketing theory - the outcome of marketing research - is not substantially developed due to the imbalance of the research approaches used by marketing researchers from the very inception of the discipline. Positivism based on objective rational ontology was the foundation of mainstream marketing research methods, over emphasis on which has resulted in a missing link between marketing research findings and the true marketing reality in the field.

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