

## **1.16 Reflexivity: Theorising the Self in Qualitative Research**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper argues for the importance of considering / constructing the self in the research process as a methodological issue. The objective of the paper is to discuss the researcher's subjectivity (despite its instability) as one of the key factors that inevitably contributes to and compromises the researcher's choices and the directions of a research study.

To do so I will take the example of my PhD research study on feminist research methodology in Sri Lanka and focus on my own subjective positioning, interests and motivations for focusing on this particular topic. I will then go on to consider the ontological / epistemological understandings, theoretical influences and methodological concerns that underpinned the progress of my work.

By consciously highlighting the operation of the researcher's self within researching, this paper will serve to challenge the value attributed to the Positivist knowledge paradigm, the criterion of objectivity and the use of scientific methods. It will underscore the significance of utilising reflexivity as mechanism that can provide validity for qualitative research.