

Excavating Blind Spots in Qualitative Research: Reflecting on a Lecturer's Experiential past

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Abstract

Buoyed by reflexivity, this paper examines blind spots that lie ahead of a qualitative research journey with particular reference to the development and production of academic dissertations and theses. It is based on the author's many years of interactions with students and their works, mainly as a research supervisor and examiner in different universities in Southern Africa. The paper observes that the aspects which students and supervisors either unintentionally or strategically ignore, neglect or are unaware of, keep them from seeing the phenomenon clearly, leading to partialities and distortions in the final research product. Overall, the paper provides a potential template for use by both the novice and established researchers in overcoming the various forms of hidden obstacles to quality research.

Key words: autobiography, blind spot, lived experience, qualitative research, reflexivity