



Worksheet: Positivist and non-positivist narratives

Write two short essays (3-4 sentences) about the given question. One essay should take a positivist approach, the other essay should take an interpretivist approach. You do not need to conduct any research, only assume a plausible relationship between various factors and the choice of university. Think about how the same question can be thought of differently. Present your essays in class.

Research Question: How do students choose their university?

Positivist approach

Hint: Think of broad characteristics that can influence students' choice, consider broad generalizations that can be stated. For example, gender and socioeconomic status may be such factors: boys can be seen as more likely to study architecture and computer science, while girls are more likely to choose colleagues for teaching and nursing; children from more affluent families may be more likely to choose law schools, while children from less affluent families may tend to choose vocational schools instead of colleges. Think of other factors as well and write one paragraph answering the leading question from a positivist perspective.

Interpretivist approach

Hint: Think of personal and specific factors that determine students' university choices, such factors can range from influence of individuals (parents, teachers, classmates, friends), to personal interest, childhood dreams and alike. Think of other factors as well and write one paragraph answering the leading question from an interpretivist perspective.
