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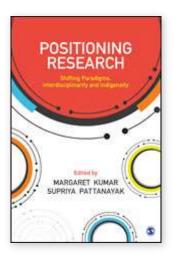
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Cart

Search: keyword, tit

Search

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Positioning Research

Shifting Paradigms, Interdisciplinarity and Indigeneity

FIRST EDITION

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- <u>Description</u>
- Contents
- Reviews
- Features

Joseph Lo Bianco

Foreword

Margaret Kumar and Supriya Pattanayak

Introduction: Positioning Research

Perspectives from Early Career Researchers

Margaret Kumar

Originality, Hybridity and Intra-paradigm Shift

Graeme Pye

Interdisciplinary Research and the Early Career Researcher

Cameron Bishop

Art, the Academy and Strategy

Ndungi wa Mungai

Early Career Researcher's Peer Support Group

Niranjala (Nina) Weerakkody

Doing Research with 'Others': Experiences of Difference and Commonality

Jacques Boulet

Researching Is Relating Time and Space

Indigenous and New Knowledge Systems

Supriya Pattanayak

Metaphors We Live by: Appreciating the Place of Language in Indigenous Research

Mark Rose

Positioning Indigenous Knowledge

Estelle Barrett

New Frontiers of Research: Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Artistic Practice

Terrence Kildea and Margaret Kumar

Aboriginal Spirituality and Its Relationship to the Positioning of Research

Binod C. Agrawal

In-depth Methods for Portraying and Understanding Cultural Realities

ISBN: 978-93-528-0617-1

Metaphors We Live By: Appreciating the Place of Language in Indigenous Research

Supriya Pattanayak

The range of contemporary critical theories suggests that it is from those who have suffered the sentence of history—subjugation, domination, diaspora, displacement that we learn our most enduring lessons for living and thinking.

-Homi Bhabha (1994, 172)

Research institutions and practitioners are called upon to commit themselves to undertaking research that is participatory; based on indigenous culture and language of the people and that would serve the needs of the local communities.

-UNESCO (1996)

Introduction

In all my years of experience as a generalist social worker, a psychiatric social worker and subsequently a development worker, I have often wondered why the rich Indian literary and philosophical traditions have not been engaged with in social science research. There are a number of historical and mythological stories that can be used to explain the reality as we experience it today. A number of metaphors have been constructed from a shared space that can be utilized in research. We find some forays in the West, but very little in the Indian context. I have made an attempt