

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Jing Lin, Rebecca Oxford, Tom Culham

1. Knowing the Unknown: Transcending the Educational Narrative of the “Kantian Paradigm” through Contemplative Inquiry

Oren Ergas

2. “Out of the Everywhere into Here”: Rhetoricity and Transcendence as Common Ground for Spiritual Research

Anne W. Anderson

3. Using a Spiritual Research Paradigm for Research and Teaching

Ramdas Lamb

4. Prolegomena to Spiritual Research Paradigm: Importance of Attending to the Embodied and the Subtle

Heesoon Bai, Patricia Morgan, Charles Scott, and Avraham Cohen

5. The Enneagram: A Spiritual Perspective for Addressing Significant Problems Through Research

Robert London

6. The Embodied Researcher: Meditation’s Role in Spirituality Research

John (Jack) P. Miller

7. Developing a Spiritual Research Paradigm: A Confucian Perspective

Jing Lin, Tom Culham, and Rebecca Oxford

8. Exploring the Unity of Science and Spirit: A Daoist Perspective

Tom Culham and Jing Lin

9. Creation Spirituality as a Spiritual Research Paradigm Drawing on Many Faiths

Rebecca L. Oxford

10. Paradigmatic Dialogues, Inter-subjectivity, and Nonduality in Qualitative Inquiry: Considerations from Hinduism’s *Advaita Vedanta*

Edward J. Brantmeier and Noorie K. Brantmeier

11. Seeking Collective Wisdom: A Spiritual-Dialogic Research Approach

Sachi Edwards

Overview

Research is a human endeavor focused on finding answers to our biggest questions. Considerable progress has been made in the breadth and depth of research paradigms that guide our efforts of knowledge creation. The field of research has expanded from a positivist and postpositivist paradigm that focuses on empirical experimentation to include interpretive and transformational paradigms that examine constructed realities and issues of social justice, human rights and cultural complexity. However, a paradigm has been lacking that enables systematic exploration of fundamental questions related to the development of spirituality. Most conventional textbooks on research methods do not cover a spiritual research paradigm. Besides this shortcoming, students in secular institutions have spiritual experiences and questions that go unanswered. There is a hunger for meaning and answers that go beyond the usual curriculum. Developing a spiritual research paradigm will help educators respond to these pressing needs.

A spiritual research paradigm requires an ontology that considers all reality to be multidimensional, interconnected, and interdependent. It requires an epistemology that integrates knowing from outer sources as well as inner contemplation, acknowledging our integration of soul and spirit with the body and mind. Three additional aspects are useful to a spiritual research paradigm: axiology, methodology, and teleology. An axiology concerns what is valued, good, and ethical. A methodology is the appropriate approach to systematic inquiry. A fifth and less frequently mentioned aspect is teleology, an explanation of the goal or end (telos) to which new knowledge is applied, such as gaining wisdom and truth, touching the divine, increasing inner peace, exploring hidden dimensions, or improving society.

This book takes the first step to develop such a research paradigm. We draw from world spiritual traditions as well as scholarship that has arisen from contemplative practices. Scientific discoveries also provide insights into the construction of a spiritual research paradigm.