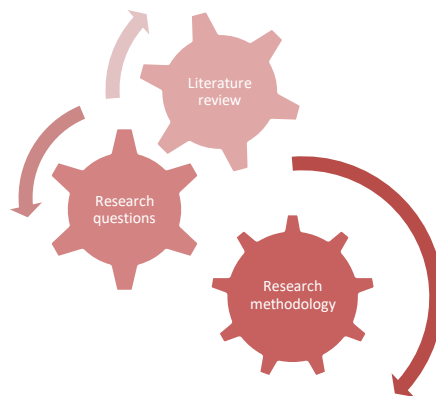




Research project: methodology

Once you have identified the need for your research through the literature review and formulated research question/s, you will design and communicate about your research methods, that is, how you will go about answering your research question/s.



Your methodology section is an essential component of the research project/plan: This section:

- connects to your literature review and your research questions
- connects to your results and your discussion sections
- shows the rigour of your research and that your choices are informed
- shows that we can trust the answers to your research questions, i.e., that your results are valid and reliable

When writing your methodology, make sure to:

- Be clear, concise and direct
- Stay on point, don't stray
- Write in chronological order
- Write in an objective style (**DO NOT** USE 'I' or 'we')
- Use correct verb tenses

Include a **DESCRIPTION** of, and a **RATIONALE** for your:

- research approach
- data collection instruments
- data collection procedures or processes
- data analysis procedures

Be clear, concise and straight to the point, present in a logical order and justify your choices.

Your research approach

Include a brief but broad description of your methodology. Explain whether you are using a quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods approach and give reasons why. Your choice of approach should be linked back to your research questions or aims, and this also should be justified.

Your data collection instruments

Explain how the information/data used to answer your research question was collected.

Data collection instruments include:

- Surveys
- Observations
- Document analysis
- Interviews
- A literature review
- Experiments
- Data modelling
- Simulations
- Computer modelling

Also explain the design and development of the instrument(s) you used, justify your choices by referring to literature on research methods, and acknowledge other possibilities.

Your data collection procedures

- Describe WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE and WHY
- Explain step-by-step how you went about collecting the data
- Use tables or diagrams to help communicate the procedures you used

For example, answer the following questions:

- Who participated in the study?
- How did you choose the participants?
- How did you recruit the participants?
- When and where did you collect the data?
- What equipment was used?
- How did you record your observations or interviews?
- What samples did you collect? How?
- What measurements did you take? How?

You may also need to describe your ethics approval procedures and considerations if your study involved human participants.

Your data analysis procedures

Describe how the data was analysed - a statistical analysis or a thematic analysis for example. Here you would also explain what software or instruments were used and reasons why.