

PREFACE

I think of research design as building a structure or plan for your research. Just as architects work with many different general types of structure—single-family homes, multifamily homes, nonresidential buildings, and so forth—social researchers have five primary structures with which they work: **quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based, and community-based participatory**. We call these **approaches to research design**, and the one we select for a given research project depends on considerations including our topic and purpose. The selected approach provides only the general purpose and structure for the research project, just as an architect with an assignment to design a single-family home still has many choices with respect to the style, layout, and size of the building.

Within each of the five major design approaches, there are innumerable possibilities for how research might proceed. We have to consider two questions: What do we want to achieve? How do we execute that goal? This is the process of building a **methodology**, which is a plan for how the research will be carried out. There are many tools at our disposal—methods, theories, and so forth—that we use to build a research plan. The philosophical point of view, professional experience, ethical standpoint, and practical skill set we, as individual researchers, bring to the table also influence how we design a project. We put our own stamp on our research projects the same way an architect might through unique stylistic features.

In addition to reviewing these five approaches to design, this book is unique because of its attention to ethical practice; emphasis on writing a research proposal (and how this proposal differs across approaches to design); modeling the use of appropriate language for each of the five designs; the extensive pedagogical features employed to make this text user-friendly for students, professors, and researchers; and the companion website and supplemental instructor resources designed to offer an entire course based around this book. (See the box at the end of the table of contents.)

Special Features of This Book

A Focus on Ethics

Often research design texts present a chapter on ethics in research or, in some cases, just a section of a chapter. However, ethics are intertwined with all phases

of the research design process. Therefore, in addition to including a robust chapter devoted to ethics, the five chapters that address methods each feature “Ethics in Practice” flags, highlighting some moments in the research process in which ethics have a bearing on decision making. Additionally, the brand new chapter on literature reviews includes coverage of the ethics surrounding citational practices.

Writing a Proposal

Most students of research methods and novice researchers alike need assistance in learning how to write a solid research proposal. Therefore, at the beginning of each of the design approach chapters (Chapters 5–9), I present a template for a research proposal. The remainder of the chapter elaborates on the elements in the template. So, instead of arbitrarily learning the dos and don’ts of each approach to design, as you learn the nuts and bolts of each approach, you are *simultaneously* learning how to put it all together in a research proposal. As a pedagogical feature, a summary of the proposal template is presented at the end of each chapter as well. It’s important to note that the format for writing research proposals bears close similarities to the organization of journal articles. In other words, writing a proposal mirrors the process of a final write-up intended for publication. So for those readers not planning to write a formal research proposal, the structure of the chapters may help you reflect on how to structure your research write-up, in addition to providing the content you need for your work. Finally, because quantitative research and (often) mixed methods research follow “deductive” research models, whereas qualitative arts- and community-based participatory research approaches generally follow “inductive” designs, I have followed those models in the structuring of the five chapters on methods. In the quantitative and mixed methods chapters, the methods instruction occurs *prior* to the use of published research examples. In the qualitative arts- and community-based participatory chapters, the methods instruction occurs *after* published research examples are presented. In these subtle ways, each methods chapter models the tenets of that approach to design.

A Note about Language

The issue of language in how we write research proposals and ultimately represent our research is important and often overlooked in the literature. Researchers using the five different approaches reviewed in this book tend to use different words to describe the components of their work. These words are meaningful and carry implications about what we, as researchers, can know and how we develop that knowledge. Here are some examples of words that may be employed as a result of the approach with which you are working (this list is by no means exhaustive):


- *Respondent, subject, participant, co-creator, collaborator*: the people on whom our research is focused.
- *Discover, generate, unearth, collect*: how knowledge is acquired.

- *Method, practice*: the tools used to gather/generate data.
- *Findings, results, renderings, outcomes*: the final product of research.
- *Data, content*: raw information.
- *Research study, inquiry*: our process.

Just taking the first example of the words used to describe the people on whom our research is focused, different approaches lead us to weight words differently. In quantitative research, we often see the word *subject* or *respondent* (although some quantitative researchers have shifted to the word *participant*); in qualitative research, we may see *participant*; in mixed methods research, we may see *respondent*, *subject*, or *participant*; in arts-based research, we typically see *participant*, *co-creator*, or *collaborator*; and in community-based participatory research, we generally see *co-creator* or *collaborator*. These differences in language are not random but rather speak to deeper issues about the philosophical beliefs and research practices guiding inquiry. In order to highlight the importance of language and model how you might write a research proposal with these five approaches, in Chapters 5–9, I employ the terms commonly used in that type of research.

Extensive Pedagogical Features

This text is meant to be very user-friendly. As such, numerous pedagogical features are employed. Key terms and concepts appear in **bold** type, and there are easy-to-read tables and figures throughout the book. Every chapter includes multiple “Review Stops” so that readers can review the information in the preceding sections. Readers are then directed to “Go” to the end of the chapter to check their answers. The Review Stops are an opportunity to pause, recap, and make sure the information has been processed before continuing. The end of every chapter also includes a “Further Engagement” section, which provides more advanced writing and research activities designed to put the chapter content into practice. Resources (books, chapters, websites) and suggested journals are also provided for each chapter, as appropriate.

There is also an extensive companion website for students. Readers are directed to the website throughout the text (via this symbol ) , where they can download worksheets and answer keys to help them learn and practice the basics of each chapter.

At the end of each methods chapter, there is a summarized version of the research proposal template. I also interviewed leading researchers across the disciplines known for their work with the five approaches reviewed in this text. Some of their top tips appear in “Expert Tip” boxes in Chapters 5–9.

The book also includes a glossary of key terms that follows Chapter 9.

PowerPoints and an Instructor’s Test Manual (with chapter tests and answer keys) are available for instructors who adopt the book for class use. Instructors can e-mail The Guilford Press at info@guilford.com (with subject line “PowerPoints for Research Design”) to request the files.

Instructors should provide the following information in their e-mail:

- Department
- University
- Name of course and level
- Expected enrollment
- Author/title of previous book used (if applicable)

Audience for the Book

This book is appropriate for undergraduate and graduate research methods courses across the social and behavioral sciences. The format of Chapters 5–9, each of which models a research proposal and shows readers how to fill in that proposal, makes the book useful for individual graduate students writing their master’s or dissertation research proposals, as well as researchers at any level looking for assistance with this process.

New to the Second Edition

1. A brand-new checklist of ethical considerations.
2. A brand-new chapter on literature reviews, including discussion of the ethics of citational practices.
3. Expanded coverage of theory and literature in quantitative research, replication studies, and brand-new content on preregistration.
4. Expanded coverage of the critical paradigm in qualitative research and a brand-new summary table comparing the different qualitative approaches.
5. Expanded coverage of mixed methods research.
6. Trimmed-down chapter on arts-based research, with a tangible example of a study with a research question that led to arts-based research.
7. Brand-new coverage of tips on how to approach different kinds of organizations in community-based participatory research.
8. A companion website that includes student worksheets and answer keys for every chapter (with notations in the text indicating when a student should complete a worksheet).
9. For faculty (available upon request), comprehensive multiple-choice tests for every chapter with answer keys, and updated PowerPoint lecture slides. All materials are author created.

10. Revised writing, updated examples, updated references, and updated recommended readings throughout the book.
11. The use of inclusive pronouns throughout the text (e.g., they or he/she/they).

Organization of the Book

Part I provides a detailed discussion of research design in general: what it is, why we do it, what the five approaches are well suited for, ethical practice, literature reviews, and the nuts and bolts of starting to design a project. Part II presents a chapter on each of the five approaches to research design. These chapters can be read independently and out of order (although it's advisable to read the quantitative and qualitative chapters prior to reading the mixed methods chapter). Chapters that aren't of interest can be skipped.