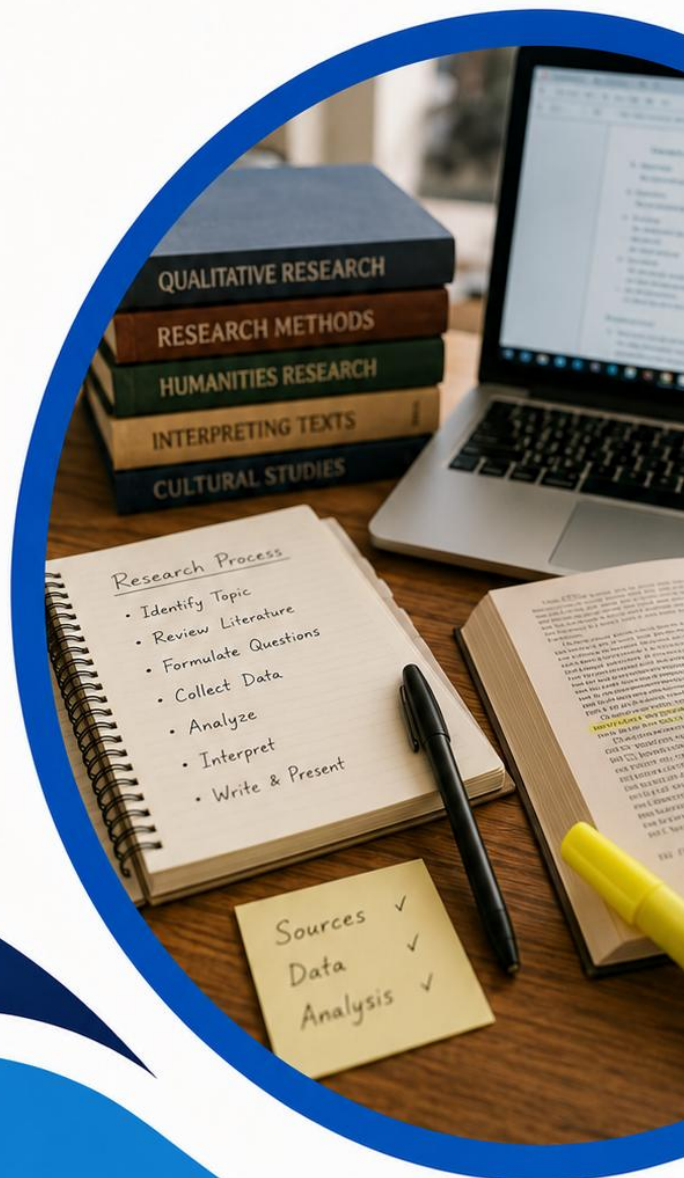




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THA 302

RESEARCH METHODS AND MATERIALS FOR THE HUMANITIES



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Course code: THA 302

Course title: Research Methods and Materials for the Humanities

Course credit load: 2 Units

List of Series:

- **Series 1:** Foundations of Research in Theatre and Performance
- **Series 2:** Designing and Applying Research Methodologies
- **Series 3:** Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Data Gathering
- **Series 4:** Exploring Archives, Repositories, and Referencing Practices
- **Series 5:** Proposal Writing, Ethics, and Defending Original Research

1 Foundations of Research in Theatre and Performance

Series Outline

- **Part 1 (1.1): Meaning and Purpose of Research in Theatre and Performance**
 - Sub-Part 1.1.1: Defining Research in the Humanities
 - Sub-Part 1.1.2: Importance of Research in Theatre and Performance
- **Part 2 (1.2): Elements of Research and Key Variables**
 - Sub-Part 1.2.1: Core Elements of Research Design
 - Sub-Part 1.2.2: Identifying and Classifying Variables
- **Part 3 (1.3): Areas of Research in Theatre and Performance**
 - Sub-Part 1.3.1: Textual and Literary Research
 - Sub-Part 1.3.2: Performance and Production Research
 - Sub-Part 1.3.3: Ethnographic and Field Research
- **Part 4 (1.4): Stating Research Problems, Aims, and Objectives**



- Sub-Part 1.4.1: Formulating Research Problems
- Sub-Part 1.4.2: Writing Clear Aims and Objectives

Introduction

Research is the foundation of academic inquiry in the humanities, and theatre and performance studies depend on it to preserve traditions, generate new knowledge, and evaluate practices. As a learner, you will discover that research is not simply about gathering information, but about asking meaningful questions and finding systematic ways to answer them. This Series introduces you to the essential principles that underpin scholarly work in theatre and performance.

The aim of this Series is to help you define the meaning and purpose of research, identify its elements and variables, explore the diverse areas of theatre research, and develop the ability to state research problems, aims, and objectives with clarity.

We shall commence this Series by examining the meaning and purpose of research in theatre and performance. Next, we will explore the elements of research and the key variables that shape inquiry. Following that, we will analyse the different areas of research in theatre and performance, ranging from textual studies to ethnographic approaches. Finally, we will conclude by discussing how to state research problems clearly and formulate aims and objectives that guide scholarly work.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 1.1** define research in the humanities and explain its purpose in theatre and performance,
- **SLO 1.2** identify and describe the core elements of research design,
- **SLO 1.3** classify and explain different types of variables in research,
- **SLO 1.4** analyse major areas of research in theatre and performance,



- **SLO 1.5** formulate clear research problems,
- **SLO 1.6** write precise aims and objectives for a research study.

1.1 Meaning And Purpose Of Research In Theatre And Performance

1.1.1 Defining research in the humanities

Research is a systematic process of **investigation**, which means a structured and deliberate effort to generate new knowledge or validate existing ideas. In the humanities, research involves exploring human experiences, cultural practices, and creative expressions. Unlike the sciences, it is not confined to laboratory experiments, but focuses on interpretation, analysis, and critical reflection. In theatre and performance, research helps us to ask questions about texts, performances, audiences, and cultural contexts, and to seek answers through structured inquiry.

Fill in the blank: Research in the humanities is a systematic process of _____ aimed at generating new knowledge or validating existing ideas.

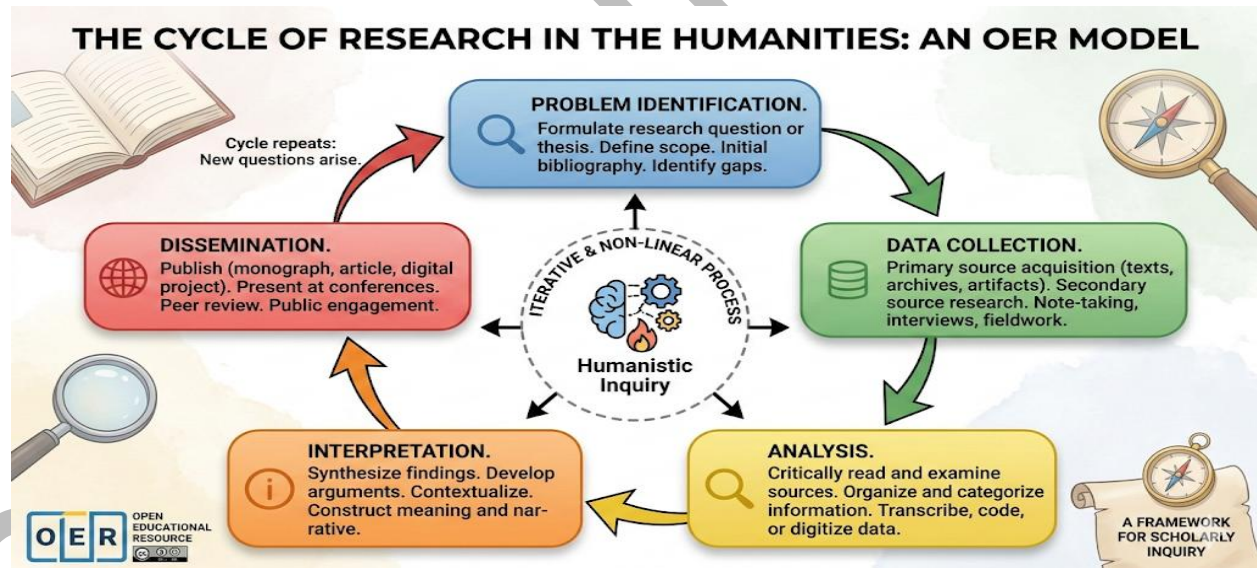


Diagram showing the cycle of research in the humanities (problem identification → data collection → analysis → interpretation → dissemination).

Figure 1.1 Research cycle in the humanities



1.1.2 Importance of research in theatre and performance

Theatre and performance are dynamic fields that reflect society, culture, and human creativity.

Research in theatre and performance refers to the systematic study of plays, performances, production processes, and audience experiences. It is important because it helps scholars and practitioners to preserve traditions, evaluate practices, and innovate new approaches. For example, ethnographic research can document community theatre practices, while textual analysis can reveal deeper meanings in dramatic literature.

Fill in the blank: Research in theatre and performance helps scholars and practitioners to _____ traditions, evaluate practices, and innovate new approaches.

Pilot questions 1.1

1. Define research in the humanities in your own words.
2. State one reason why research is important in theatre and performance.
3. Fill in the blank: Research in theatre and performance involves the systematic study of _____, performances, production processes, and audience experiences.
4. Identify one research method suitable for documenting community theatre practices.
5. True or False: Research in the humanities is primarily concerned with interpretation, analysis, and reflection rather than laboratory experiments.

1.2 Elements Of Research And Key Variables

1.2.1 Core elements of research design

Every research study begins with a **research design**, which is the structured plan that guides how the study will be conducted. A research design defines the problem, sets objectives, identifies methods, and outlines how data will be collected and analysed. In theatre and performance, this might involve choosing whether to study a script, observe rehearsals, or interview audiences. A clear design ensures that the research remains systematic and purposeful.



Fill in the blank: A research design is the structured _____ that guides how a study will be conducted.

1.2.2 Identifying and classifying variables

A **variable** is any factor, condition, or characteristic that can change or vary in a study. In theatre research, variables may include audience size, performance style, or cultural context. Variables are often classified as **independent variables** (those manipulated or chosen by the researcher) and **dependent variables** (those measured to see the effect). Recognising variables helps researchers to organise their study and interpret findings accurately.

Fill in the blank: In research, an independent variable is the factor that the researcher _____, while the dependent variable is the factor that is measured.

Variable Type	Definition	Example in Theatre Research
Independent Variable	The factor that is changed or controlled to test its effects.	Choice of performance style (e.g., Naturalism vs. Epic Theatre)
Dependent Variable	The factor being tested and measured; it changes based on the independent variable.	Audience engagement levels (measured via heart rate or surveys)
Independent Variable	The specific input or environmental condition.	Lighting intensity and color temperature



Variable Type	Definition	Example in Theatre Research
Dependent Variable	The outcome or reaction observed by the researcher.	Perceived emotional atmosphere (reported by the audience)

Table 1.1 Examples of variables in theatre research

Pilot questions 1.2

1. Define research design in your own words.
2. State one reason why a clear research design is important.
3. Fill in the blank: A variable is any factor, condition, or _____ that can change in a study.
4. Identify one independent variable that could be studied in theatre research.
5. True or False: Dependent variables are those measured to see the effect of changes in independent variables.

1.3 Areas Of Research In Theatre And Performance

1.3.1 Textual and literary research

Textual research focuses on analysing **dramatic texts**, scripts, and literary works. It involves studying themes, language, structure, and historical context. For example, examining Shakespeare's plays can reveal insights into Elizabethan society and performance traditions.

Fill in the blank: Textual research in theatre involves analysing _____, scripts, and literary works.



1.3.2 Performance and production research

Performance research examines the **process of staging and producing theatre**, including rehearsals, directing, acting, and stage design. It often involves observing live performances or studying production notes to understand artistic choices and their impact.

Fill in the blank: Performance research often involves observing _____ performances or studying production notes.

1.3.3 Ethnographic and field research

Ethnographic research uses **fieldwork** to study theatre in its social and cultural context. This may include documenting community theatre, interviewing participants, or observing rituals and festivals. It provides valuable insights into how theatre functions within communities.

Fill in the blank: Ethnographic research uses _____ to study theatre in its social and cultural context.



Image of a researcher interviewing actors in a rehearsal space.

Plate 1.2 Ethnographic research in theatre practice



Pilot questions 1.3

1. Define textual research in theatre.
2. State one aspect of performance research that can be studied.
3. Fill in the blank: Ethnographic research uses _____ to study theatre in its social and cultural context.
4. Identify one example of community theatre that could be studied ethnographically.
5. True or False: Performance research focuses only on scripts and literary analysis.

1.4 Stating Research Problems, Aims, And Objectives

1.4.1 Formulating research problems

A **research problem** is the specific issue, gap, or question that a study seeks to address. In theatre and performance, a research problem might involve exploring how audiences respond to experimental productions, or how traditional storytelling methods are preserved in community theatre. A well-formulated problem is clear, focused, and researchable. It should highlight what is not yet known and why it is important to investigate.

Fill in the blank: A research problem is the specific _____, gap, or question that a study seeks to address.

1.4.2 Writing clear aims and objectives

Research aims are broad statements that express the overall purpose of a study, while **research objectives** are precise, measurable steps that guide how the aim will be achieved. For example, an aim might be “to examine the role of improvisation in contemporary theatre,” while objectives could include “to analyse selected performances” and “to interview directors about their use of improvisation.” Clear aims and objectives provide direction and ensure that the research remains systematic.



Fill in the blank: Research aims are broad statements of purpose, while research objectives are precise, _____ steps that guide how the aim will be achieved.

Component	Example 1: Contemporary Practice	Example 2: Historical Analysis
Research Aim	To explore the role of improvisation in contemporary experimental theatre.	To investigate the influence of 19th-century melodrama on modern cinematic acting.
Objective 1	To identify and analyze three selected performances that utilize long-form improvisation.	To document the primary stage conventions used in Victorian-era melodramatic performances.
Objective 2	To conduct interviews with professional directors regarding their rehearsal strategies.	To compare specific physical gestures from archival play scripts with modern film performances.
Objective 3	To evaluate the impact of spontaneous dialogue on audience engagement.	To synthesize findings into a report on the evolution of "heightened" acting styles.

Box 1.1 Examples of aims and objectives in theatre research

Pilot questions 1.4

1. Define a research problem in your own words.
2. State one characteristic of a well-formulated research problem.



3. Fill in the blank: Research aims are broad statements of _____, while research objectives are precise steps.
4. Write one example of a research aim in theatre and performance.
5. True or False: Research objectives are measurable steps that guide how the aim will be achieved.

Series Summary

This Series has introduced you to the foundations of research in theatre and performance, highlighting its purpose and relevance to the humanities. We began by defining research and explaining why it is essential in theatre and performance. Then we explored the elements of research design and the role of variables in shaping inquiry. Following that, we examined the major areas of research, including textual, performance, and ethnographic approaches. Finally, we discussed how to state research problems clearly and how to write aims and objectives that provide direction for scholarly work.

By engaging with these topics, you have achieved the Series Learning Outcomes. You can now define research and explain its purpose in theatre and performance, identify and describe the elements of research design, classify variables, analyse different areas of research, and formulate research problems, aims, and objectives. These skills form the foundation for your future work in theatre and performance studies.

Glossary of Terms

- **Aim:** A broad statement that expresses the overall purpose of a research study.
- **Dependent variable:** A factor measured in research to determine the effect of changes in the independent variable.
- **Ethnographic research:** A method of studying theatre in its social and cultural context through fieldwork, observation, and interviews.



- **Independent variable:** A factor manipulated or chosen by the researcher to observe its effect on other variables.
- **Objective:** A precise, measurable step that guides how a research aim will be achieved.
- **Research design:** A structured plan that outlines how a study will be conducted, including problem definition, objectives, methods, and data analysis.
- **Research problem:** A specific issue, gap, or question that a study seeks to address.
- **Textual research:** The analysis of dramatic texts, scripts, and literary works to understand themes, language, and context.
- **Variable:** Any factor, condition, or characteristic that can change or vary in a study.

Concept Check Questions 1

Objective questions

1. Fill in the blank: A research problem is the specific _____, gap, or question that a study seeks to address. (Linked to SLO 1.5)
2. True or False: Research objectives are measurable steps that guide how the aim will be achieved. (Linked to SLO 1.6)

Short-answer questions

3. Define research design and explain why it is important in theatre and performance. (Linked to SLO 1.2)
4. Identify one independent variable and one dependent variable that could be studied in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 1.3)

Long-answer questions

5. Analyse the importance of ethnographic research in theatre and performance, giving examples of how it can be applied. (Linked to SLO 1.4)
6. Discuss how aims and objectives provide direction in theatre research, using a practical example. (Linked to SLO 1.6)



Answers to Concept Check Questions 1

Objective questions

1. Issue
2. True

Short-answer questions

3. A research design is a structured plan that guides how a study will be conducted. It is important because it ensures the study remains systematic and purposeful.
4. Independent variable: choice of performance style. Dependent variable: audience engagement levels.

Long-answer questions

5. *Basic response:* Ethnographic research is important because it studies theatre in its social and cultural context, often through fieldwork and interviews.

Value-added response: Beyond documenting practices, ethnographic research helps to preserve cultural traditions, understand community dynamics, and reveal how theatre functions as a social tool. For example, studying community theatre in rural areas can show how performance fosters social cohesion.

6. *Basic response:* Aims and objectives provide direction by clarifying the purpose of a study and breaking it into measurable steps.

Value-added response: They also ensure that research remains focused and achievable. For instance, an aim to explore improvisation in contemporary theatre can be supported by objectives such as analysing selected performances and interviewing directors, which make the study practical and systematic.

Answers to Pilot Questions 1

Part 1.1 Meaning and Purpose of Research in Theatre and Performance



1. Research in the humanities is a systematic investigation aimed at generating new knowledge or validating existing ideas.
2. It is important in theatre and performance because it preserves traditions, evaluates practices, and fosters innovation.
3. Plays.
4. Ethnographic research.
5. True.

Part 1.2 Elements of Research and Key Variables

1. A research design is a structured plan that guides how a study will be conducted.
2. It ensures the study remains systematic and purposeful.
3. A variable is any characteristic.
4. An independent variable is manipulated by the researcher.
5. True.

Part 1.3 Areas of Research in Theatre and Performance

1. Textual research involves analysing dramatic texts.
2. Performance research often involves observing live performances.
3. Ethnographic research uses fieldwork.
4. Community theatre.
5. False.

Part 1.4 Stating Research Problems, Aims, and Objectives

1. A research problem is a specific issue.
2. It should be clear and focused.
3. Research aims are broad statements of purpose.



4. Example: To explore improvisation in contemporary theatre.
5. True.

References And Attributions 1

This Series was developed using the official course outline for **THA 302: Research Methods and Materials for the Humanities** and instructional design principles for self-learning materials. External scholarly sources were consulted to enrich definitions and examples.

External Sources

- Helpful Professor. (2023). *Research Objectives Examples*. Retrieved from Helpful Professor website
- DiscoverPhDs. (2024). *Aims and Objectives – Guide for Thesis and Dissertations*. Retrieved from DiscoverPhDs website
- Simply Psychology. (2025). *Independent vs Dependent Variables: Definition & Examples*. Retrieved from Simply Psychology website
- Lumivero. (2025). *Independent vs Dependent Variables: Complete Research Guide*. Retrieved from Lumivero website

Illustrations

- *Figure 1.1 Research cycle in the humanities*
 - AI prompt: “Create a simple diagram showing the cycle of research in the humanities with arrows linking problem identification, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “research cycle diagram humanities OER”
- *Table 1.1 Examples of variables in theatre research*
 - AI prompt: “Generate a simple table showing independent and dependent variables with examples from theatre research.”



- Suggested OER search string: “independent dependent variables examples theatre OER”
- *Plate 1.2 Ethnographic research in theatre practice*
 - AI prompt: “Generate an image of a researcher interviewing actors during a rehearsal in a small theatre space.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “ethnographic theatre research rehearsal OER image”
- *Box 1.1 Examples of aims and objectives in theatre research*
 - AI prompt: “Generate a simple text box showing examples of aims and objectives in theatre research.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “examples of aims and objectives theatre research OER”

Attribution Note

All illustration prompts were designed for AI generation and are not sourced from copyrighted material. Suggested search strings are intended to help learners locate open educational resources (OERs) that provide similar diagrams, tables, or images.



2 Designing And Applying Research Methodologies

Series Outline

- **Part 2.1: Understanding Research Methodologies**
 - Sub-Part 2.1.1: Defining methodology and its role
 - Sub-Part 2.1.2: Distinguishing methodology from methods
- **Part 2.2: Qualitative Research Methodologies**
 - Sub-Part 2.2.1: Case study approach
 - Sub-Part 2.2.2: Ethnography and participant observation
 - Sub-Part 2.2.3: Grounded theory and narrative inquiry
- **Part 2.3: Quantitative Research Methodologies**
 - Sub-Part 2.3.1: Experimental design
 - Sub-Part 2.3.2: Surveys and questionnaires
 - Sub-Part 2.3.3: Statistical analysis in theatre research
- **Part 2.4: Applying Mixed Methods in Theatre and Performance**
 - Sub-Part 2.4.1: Integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches
 - Sub-Part 2.4.2: Advantages and challenges of mixed methods

Introduction

Research methodologies provide the framework through which scholars design and conduct their studies. In theatre and performance, choosing the right methodology is crucial because it determines how questions are asked, how data is collected, and how findings are interpreted.

This Series introduces you to the major methodologies used in humanities research, with a focus on their application in theatre and performance.



The aim of this Series is to help you understand different research methodologies, distinguish between qualitative and quantitative approaches, and apply them effectively in theatre and performance studies.

We shall commence this Series by defining research methodology and clarifying its role in scholarly inquiry. Next, we will explore qualitative methodologies such as case studies, ethnography, and narrative inquiry. Following that, we will examine quantitative methodologies including experimental design, surveys, and statistical analysis. Finally, we will conclude by discussing mixed methods, showing how qualitative and quantitative approaches can be integrated to provide richer insights.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 2.1** define research methodology and explain its role in scholarly inquiry,
- **SLO 2.2** distinguish between methodology and methods,
- **SLO 2.3** analyse qualitative methodologies such as case studies, ethnography, and narrative inquiry,
- **SLO 2.4** apply quantitative methodologies including experimental design, surveys, and statistical analysis,
- **SLO 2.5** evaluate the advantages and challenges of mixed methods in theatre and performance research.

2.1 Understanding Research Methodologies

2.1.1 Defining methodology and its role

A **research methodology** is the overarching framework that guides how a study is designed and conducted. It provides the philosophical foundation and systematic approach that ensures the research is coherent, valid, and reliable. In theatre and performance, methodology determines



whether a study will focus on textual analysis, ethnographic observation, or statistical measurement.

Fill in the blank: A research methodology is the overarching _____ that guides how a study is designed and conducted.

2.1.2 Distinguishing methodology from methods

It is important to distinguish between **methodology** and **methods**. Methodology refers to the overall strategy and rationale of the research, while methods are the specific tools and techniques used to collect and analyse data. For example, ethnography is a methodology, while interviews and participant observation are methods within that framework.

Fill in the blank: Methodology refers to the overall strategy, while methods are the specific _____ used to collect and analyse data.

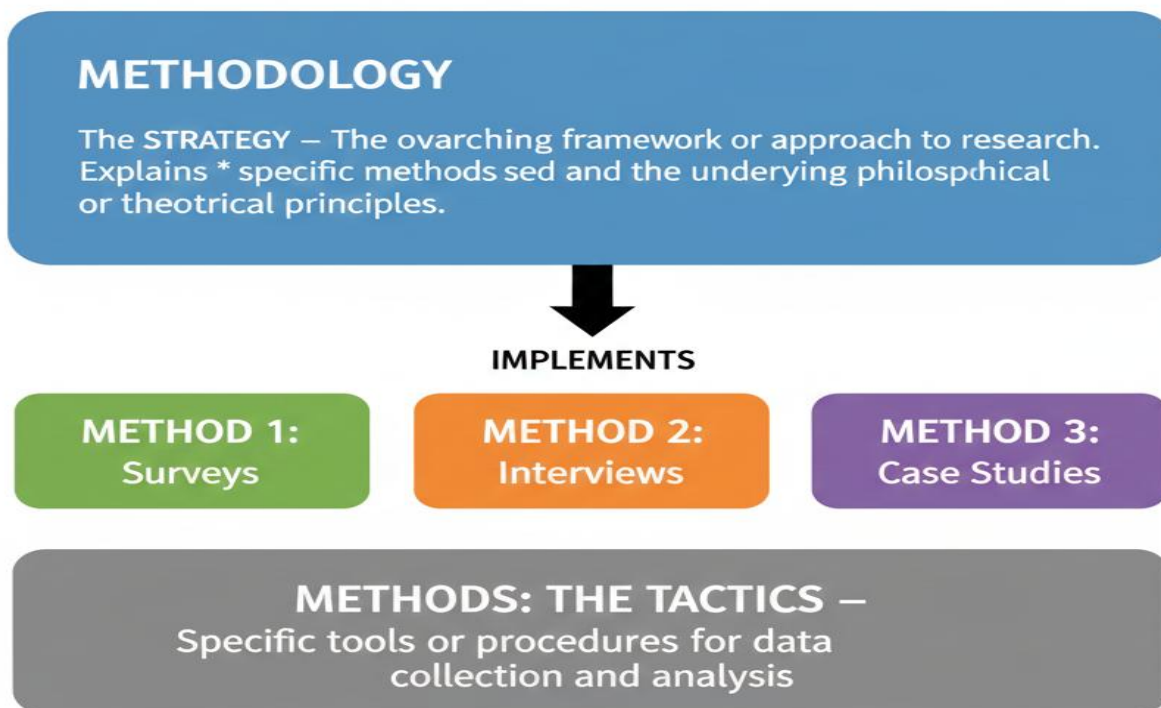


Diagram comparing methodology (overall framework) and methods (specific tools).

Figure 2.1 Distinction between methodology and methods



Pilot questions 2.1

1. Define research methodology in your own words.
2. State one reason why methodology is important in theatre and performance research.
3. Fill in the blank: Methodology refers to the overall strategy, while methods are the specific _____ used to collect and analyse data.
4. Give one example of a methodology and one method in theatre research.
5. True or False: Interviews are considered a methodology.

2.2 Qualitative Research Methodologies

2.2.1 Case study approach

A **case study** is a qualitative methodology that involves an in-depth investigation of a single subject, performance, or theatre company. It allows researchers to explore complex issues in detail and generate insights that may not be visible in broader studies.

Fill in the blank: A case study involves an in-depth investigation of a single _____, performance, or theatre company.

2.2.2 Ethnography and participant observation

Ethnography is a methodology that studies theatre in its cultural and social context through **participant observation** and interviews. It provides rich descriptions of practices, rituals, and performances, helping researchers understand theatre as lived experience.

Fill in the blank: Ethnography studies theatre in its cultural and social context through _____ observation and interviews.



2.2.3 Grounded theory and narrative inquiry

Grounded theory is a methodology that develops theories directly from data collected in the field. In theatre research, it can be used to build new frameworks for understanding performance practices. **Narrative inquiry** focuses on stories and personal accounts, exploring how individuals experience and interpret theatre.

Fill in the blank: Grounded theory develops _____ directly from data collected in the field.



Image of a researcher observing and interviewing actors during rehearsal.

Plate 2.1 Ethnographic fieldwork in theatre research



Pilot questions 2.2

1. Define a case study in theatre research.
2. State one advantage of ethnography in performance studies.
3. Fill in the blank: Grounded theory develops _____ directly from data collected in the field.
4. Give one example of narrative inquiry in theatre research.
5. True or False: Ethnography relies only on textual analysis.

2.3 Quantitative Research Methodologies

2.3.1 Experimental design

An **experimental design** is a structured approach where researchers manipulate one or more variables to observe their effect on others. In theatre research, this might involve changing performance conditions (such as lighting or staging) to measure audience responses. This design helps establish cause-and-effect relationships.

Fill in the blank: An experimental design involves manipulating one or more _____ to observe their effect on others.

2.3.2 Surveys and questionnaires

Surveys and questionnaires are tools used to collect data from large groups of people. In theatre research, they can be used to gather information about audience preferences, satisfaction, or demographic characteristics. They provide measurable data that can be analysed statistically.

Fill in the blank: Surveys and questionnaires are tools used to collect data from large groups of _____.



2.3.3 Statistical analysis in theatre research

Statistical analysis involves applying mathematical techniques to interpret numerical data. In theatre, this might include analysing ticket sales, audience demographics, or survey results. Statistical methods help researchers identify patterns and draw reliable conclusions.

Fill in the blank: Statistical analysis involves applying _____ techniques to interpret numerical data.

Quantitative Method	Example Application in Theatre Research
Experimental Design	Testing audience physiological or emotional responses to specific lighting changes or soundscapes.
Surveys	Collecting data on audience preferences, satisfaction levels, or demographic information.
Statistical Analysis	Analysing ticket sales, box office trends, and the impact of marketing on attendance.
Quantitative Content Analysis	Measuring the frequency of specific themes, keywords, or character tropes across a large database of scripts.
Structured Observation	Using eye-tracking or movement-tracking technology to quantify spectator engagement during a performance.

Table 2.1 Examples of quantitative methods in theatre research



Pilot questions 2.3

1. Define experimental design in your own words.
2. State one example of how surveys can be used in theatre research.
3. Fill in the blank: Statistical analysis involves applying _____ techniques to interpret numerical data.
4. Identify one advantage of using quantitative methods in theatre research.
5. True or False: Surveys and questionnaires are qualitative methodologies.

2.4 Applying Mixed Methods In Theatre And Performance

2.4.1 Integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches

Mixed methods research combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a topic. In theatre, this might involve observing performances (qualitative) while also collecting survey data from audiences (quantitative). Integration allows researchers to capture both depth and breadth of information.

Fill in the blank: Mixed methods research combines qualitative and _____ approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

2.4.2 Advantages and challenges of mixed methods

Mixed methods offer several advantages, such as triangulating data for greater validity and capturing diverse perspectives. However, they also present challenges, including the need for more resources, time, and expertise to manage both qualitative and quantitative components. In theatre research, mixed methods are particularly useful when studying complex phenomena like audience engagement or cultural impact.



Fill in the blank: One challenge of mixed methods research is that it requires more _____, time, and expertise to manage.

Advantages	Challenges
Triangulation for Validity: Cross-verifying survey data with rehearsal observations ensures a more robust and credible conclusion.	Resource Intensive: Requires significantly more time and funding to conduct two distinct types of data collection and analysis.
Depth & Breadth: Captures both the <i>scale</i> of an impact (e.g., 85% of viewers felt moved) and the <i>nuance</i> (why they felt moved).	Expertise Gap: Demands proficiency in two different skill sets—statistical analysis and thematic/critical performance analysis.
Captures "Soft" Data: Allows researchers to document subjective emotional experiences alongside objective production metrics.	Integration Complexity: The most difficult stage is "mixing" the data—weaving numbers and narratives together into a cohesive argument.
Flexibility: Can be designed sequentially (e.g., using a focus group to build a better survey) or concurrently (doing both at once).	Conflicting Results: If a survey says a play was "clear" but interviews reveal "confusion," the researcher must spend extra time reconciling these paradoxes.

Box 2.1 Advantages and challenges of mixed methods in theatre research



Pilot questions 2.4

1. Define mixed methods research.
2. State one advantage of using mixed methods in theatre research.
3. Fill in the blank: One challenge of mixed methods research is that it requires more _____, time, and expertise to manage.
4. Give one example of how qualitative and quantitative approaches can be integrated in theatre research.
5. True or False: Mixed methods research captures both depth and breadth of information.

Series Summary

This Series has introduced you to the design and application of research methodologies in theatre and performance. We began by defining methodology and clarifying its distinction from methods. We then explored qualitative methodologies such as case studies, ethnography, grounded theory, and narrative inquiry. Following that, we examined quantitative methodologies including experimental design, surveys, and statistical analysis. Finally, we discussed mixed methods, showing how qualitative and quantitative approaches can be integrated to provide comprehensive insights, while also noting their advantages and challenges.

By engaging with these topics, you have achieved the Series Learning Outcomes. You can now define methodology, distinguish it from methods, analyse qualitative and quantitative approaches, and evaluate the use of mixed methods in theatre and performance research. These skills will enable you to design effective studies that capture both depth and breadth of understanding.

Glossary of Terms

- **Case study:** A qualitative methodology involving in-depth investigation of a single subject, performance, or theatre company.



- **Ethnography:** A methodology that studies theatre in its cultural and social context through participant observation and interviews.
- **Experimental design:** A quantitative methodology where variables are manipulated to observe cause-and-effect relationships.
- **Grounded theory:** A methodology that develops theories directly from data collected in the field.
- **Methodology:** The overarching framework or strategy that guides how a study is designed and conducted.
- **Methods:** Specific tools and techniques used to collect and analyse data within a methodology.
- **Mixed methods:** An approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative methodologies in a single study.
- **Narrative inquiry:** A qualitative methodology that explores stories and personal accounts to understand experiences.
- **Statistical analysis:** The application of mathematical techniques to interpret numerical data.
- **Survey:** A quantitative tool used to collect data from large groups of people.

Concept Check Questions 2

Objective questions

1. Fill in the blank: A research methodology is the overarching _____ that guides how a study is designed and conducted. (Linked to SLO 2.1)
2. True or False: Interviews are considered a methodology. (Linked to SLO 2.2)

Short-answer questions

3. Define ethnography and explain its relevance in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
4. Identify one example of a quantitative method used in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 2.4)



Long-answer questions

5. Analyse the strengths and limitations of case study methodology in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 2.3)
6. Evaluate the advantages and challenges of mixed methods in theatre and performance research. (Linked to SLO 2.5)

Answers to Concept Check Questions 2

Objective questions

1. Framework.
2. False.

Short-answer questions

3. Ethnography is a methodology that studies theatre in its cultural and social context through participant observation and interviews. It is relevant because it captures theatre as lived experience.
4. Surveys are a quantitative method used to collect data on audience preferences and demographics.

Long-answer questions

5. *Basic response:* Case studies provide detailed insights into a single subject or performance, making them useful for exploring complex issues.

Value-added response: They allow for deep contextual analysis but may lack generalisability. For example, studying one theatre company can reveal unique practices but may not represent the wider industry.

6. *Basic response:* Mixed methods combine qualitative and quantitative approaches, offering comprehensive insights.

Value-added response: They enhance validity through triangulation and capture diverse perspectives, but they require more resources, time, and expertise. In theatre research, mixed methods are particularly effective for studying audience engagement, blending observation with survey data.



Answers to Pilot Questions 2

Part 2.1 Understanding Research Methodologies

1. A research methodology is the overarching framework that guides how a study is designed and conducted.
2. It ensures coherence, validity, and reliability.
3. Tools.
4. Example: Ethnography (methodology) and interviews (method).
5. False.

Part 2.2 Qualitative Research Methodologies

1. A case study is an in-depth investigation of a single subject, performance, or theatre company.
2. It provides rich descriptions of practices and lived experiences.
3. Theories.
4. Example: Collecting personal stories from actors about their rehearsal experiences.
5. False.

Part 2.3 Quantitative Research Methodologies

1. Experimental design involves manipulating variables to observe cause-and-effect relationships.
2. Surveys can be used to gather data on audience preferences.
3. Mathematical.
4. They provide measurable data that can be analysed statistically.
5. False.



Part 2.4 Applying Mixed Methods in Theatre and Performance

1. Mixed methods research combines qualitative and quantitative approaches.
2. It provides comprehensive insights and triangulates data.
3. Resources.
4. Example: Observing performances while also collecting survey data from audiences.
5. True.

References And Attributions 2

External Sources

- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2017). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Punch, K. F. (2014). *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Illustrations

- *Figure 2.1 Distinction between methodology and methods*
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing methodology as an overarching framework and methods as specific tools beneath it.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “difference between methodology and methods diagram OER”
- *Plate 2.1 Ethnographic fieldwork in theatre research*



- AI prompt: “Generate an image of a researcher observing and interviewing actors during a rehearsal in a small theatre space.”
- Suggested OER search string: “ethnographic theatre research rehearsal OER image”
- *Table 2.1 Examples of quantitative methods in theatre research*
 - AI prompt: “Generate a simple table showing examples of quantitative methods in theatre research with applications.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “quantitative methods theatre research OER table”
- *Box 2.1 Advantages and challenges of mixed methods in theatre research*
 - AI prompt: “Generate a text box showing advantages and challenges of mixed methods in theatre research.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “mixed methods advantages challenges theatre research OER”

Attribution Note

All illustration prompts were designed for AI generation and are not sourced from copyrighted material. Suggested search strings are intended to help learners locate open educational resources (OERs) that provide similar diagrams, tables, or images.



3 Qualitative And Quantitative Approaches To Data Gathering

Series Outline

- **Part 3.1: Introduction to Data Gathering**
 - Sub-Part 3.1.1: Meaning of data in research
 - Sub-Part 3.1.2: Importance of data gathering in theatre and performance
- **Part 3.2: Qualitative Approaches to Data Gathering**
 - Sub-Part 3.2.1: Interviews
 - Sub-Part 3.2.2: Focus groups
 - Sub-Part 3.2.3: Observation and field notes
- **Part 3.3: Quantitative Approaches to Data Gathering**
 - Sub-Part 3.3.1: Surveys and questionnaires
 - Sub-Part 3.3.2: Structured observation
 - Sub-Part 3.3.3: Use of existing statistical records
- **Part 3.4: Comparing Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches**
 - Sub-Part 3.4.1: Strengths and limitations of qualitative approaches
 - Sub-Part 3.4.2: Strengths and limitations of quantitative approaches
 - Sub-Part 3.4.3: Choosing the right approach for theatre research

Introduction

Data gathering is the backbone of any research project. In theatre and performance studies, data can take many forms: scripts, interviews, audience surveys, rehearsal notes, or statistical records. Without data, research lacks evidence and credibility. This Series introduces you to both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data gathering, showing how each method contributes to the richness of theatre research.



The aim of this Series is to help you understand the meaning and importance of data, explore qualitative and quantitative methods of gathering it, and learn how to compare and choose approaches that best suit your research objectives.

We shall commence this Series by defining data and explaining its importance in theatre and performance research. Next, we will examine qualitative approaches such as interviews, focus groups, and observation. Following that, we will explore quantitative approaches including surveys, structured observation, and statistical records. Finally, we will compare both approaches, highlighting their strengths, limitations, and suitability for different research contexts.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 3.1** define data and explain its importance in theatre and performance research,
- **SLO 3.2** apply qualitative approaches such as interviews, focus groups, and observation,
- **SLO 3.3** use quantitative approaches including surveys, structured observation, and statistical records,
- **SLO 3.4** compare qualitative and quantitative approaches, evaluating their strengths and limitations,
- **SLO 3.5** select appropriate data gathering approaches for specific theatre and performance research problems.

3.1 Introduction To Data Gathering

3.1.1 Meaning of data in research

Data refers to information collected systematically to answer research questions. In theatre and performance, data may include scripts, rehearsal notes, interviews, surveys, or audience



feedback. Data can be qualitative (descriptive, narrative, or observational) or quantitative (numerical, measurable, or statistical).

Fill in the blank: Data refers to information collected _____ to answer research questions.

3.1.2 Importance of data gathering in theatre and performance

Data gathering is crucial because it provides the evidence upon which conclusions are based. Without data, research lacks credibility and cannot be validated. In theatre studies, gathering data helps document practices, understand audience behaviour, and evaluate artistic choices. For example, interviews with actors can reveal rehearsal processes, while surveys can measure audience satisfaction.

Fill in the blank: Data gathering provides the _____ upon which research conclusions are based.

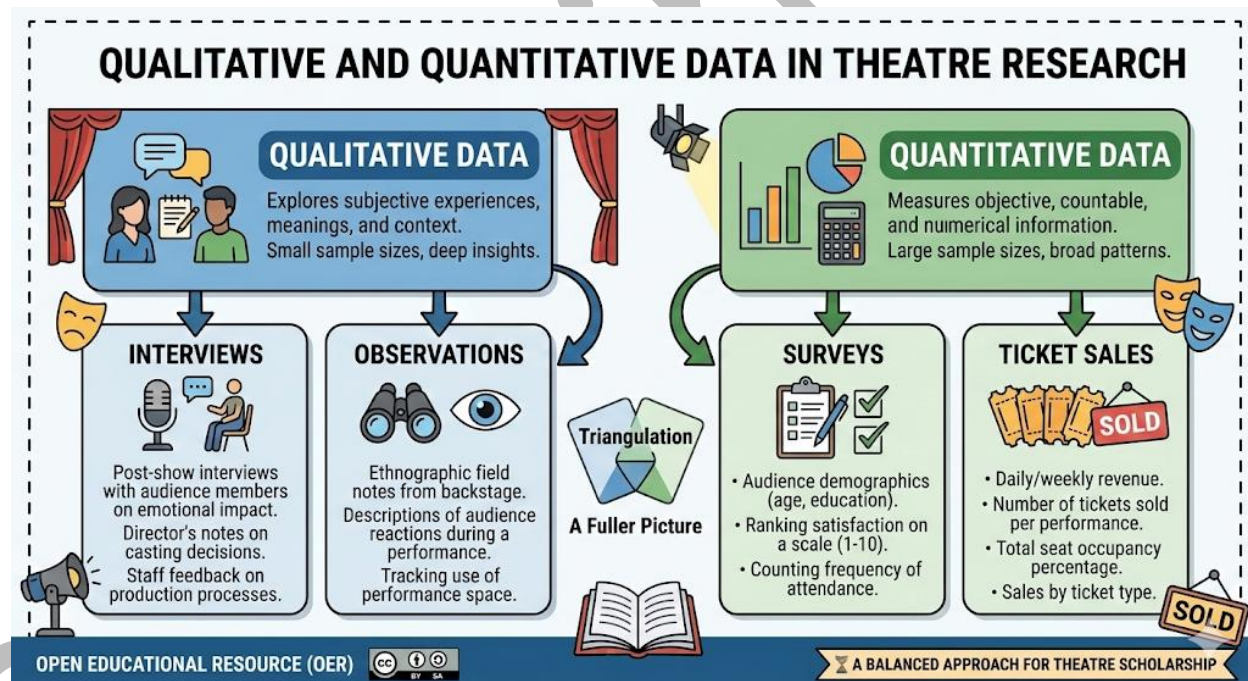


Diagram showing types of data (qualitative vs quantitative) with examples from theatre research.

Figure 3.1 Types of data in theatre research



Pilot questions 3.1

1. Define data in the context of research.
2. State one example of qualitative data in theatre research.
3. Fill in the blank: Data gathering provides the _____ upon which research conclusions are based.
4. Identify one reason why data gathering is important in theatre and performance.
5. True or False: Ticket sales are an example of qualitative data.

3.2 Qualitative Approaches To Data Gathering

3.2.1 Interviews

Interviews are a qualitative method where researchers ask participants questions to gather detailed information. In theatre research, interviews may be conducted with actors, directors, or audience members to explore experiences, motivations, and interpretations.

Fill in the blank: Interviews are a qualitative method where researchers ask _____ questions to gather detailed information.

3.2.2 Focus groups

A **focus group** involves guided discussion with a small group of participants. In theatre, focus groups can be used to explore audience reactions to a performance or to discuss community theatre practices. They provide diverse perspectives and stimulate interaction among participants.

Fill in the blank: A focus group involves guided discussion with a small group of _____.



3.2.3 Observation and field notes

Observation is a method where researchers watch and record behaviours, actions, or events. In theatre, this may involve observing rehearsals or performances. **Field notes** are written records of these observations, capturing details that may not be evident in recordings.

Fill in the blank: Field notes are written records of _____ made during observation.



Image of a researcher taking notes while observing a rehearsal.

Plate 3.1 Researcher recording field notes during rehearsal

Pilot questions 3.2

1. Define interviews as a qualitative method in theatre research.
2. State one advantage of using focus groups in performance studies.
3. Fill in the blank: Field notes are written records of _____ made during observation.



4. Give one example of how observation can be applied in theatre research.
5. True or False: Focus groups are a quantitative method.

3.3 Quantitative Approaches To Data Gathering

3.3.1 Surveys and questionnaires

Surveys and questionnaires are structured tools used to collect data from large groups of people. In theatre research, they can be distributed to audiences to measure satisfaction, preferences, or demographic information. They provide numerical data that can be analysed statistically.

Fill in the blank: Surveys and questionnaires are structured tools used to collect data from large groups of _____.

3.3.2 Structured observation

Structured observation involves watching and recording behaviours using a predetermined checklist or framework. In theatre, this might mean counting how many times an audience reacts (applause, laughter) during a performance. This method produces quantifiable data.

Fill in the blank: Structured observation involves watching and recording behaviours using a predetermined _____ or framework.

3.3.3 Use of existing statistical records

Existing **statistical records** such as ticket sales, attendance figures, or box office reports can be valuable sources of quantitative data. They provide measurable evidence of audience engagement and theatre performance trends.

Fill in the blank: Existing statistical records such as ticket sales provide measurable evidence of _____ engagement.



Quantitative Data Source	Example Application in Theatre Research
Surveys/Questionnaires	Measuring audience satisfaction levels, expectations, or demographic profiles (e.g., using Likert scales).
Structured Observation	Systematically counting and timing behavioral responses, such as intervals of applause, laughter, or fidgeting.
Box Office/Ticket Records	Analysing long-term trends in ticket sales, pricing strategies, audience frequency, and seat utilization.
Attendance Logs/Data	Tracking daily attendance, drop-out rates (for festivals), and the impact of weather or time of day.
Physiological Sensors	Using eye-tracking to count gaze fixations, or heart rate monitors to quantify emotional arousal during performances.
Digital Analytics	Measuring the number of website clicks, video views, or social media mentions related to a specific production.

Table 3.1 Examples of quantitative data sources in theatre research



Pilot questions 3.3

1. Define surveys and questionnaires in theatre research.
2. State one example of structured observation in performance studies.
3. Fill in the blank: Existing statistical records such as ticket sales provide measurable evidence of _____ engagement.
4. Identify one advantage of using quantitative data in theatre research.
5. True or False: Structured observation produces descriptive rather than numerical data.

3.4 Comparing Qualitative And Quantitative Approaches

3.4.1 Strengths and limitations of qualitative approaches

Qualitative approaches provide rich, detailed insights into experiences and meanings. They are useful for exploring complex phenomena such as rehearsal processes or audience interpretations. However, they can be time-consuming and may lack generalisability.

Fill in the blank: Qualitative approaches provide rich, detailed insights into _____ and meanings.

3.4.2 Strengths and limitations of quantitative approaches

Quantitative approaches provide measurable, generalisable data that can be analysed statistically. They are useful for identifying patterns and trends, such as audience demographics. However, they may overlook the depth of personal experiences and cultural contexts.

Fill in the blank: Quantitative approaches provide measurable, generalisable data that can be analysed _____.



3.4.3 Choosing the right approach for theatre research

The choice between qualitative and quantitative approaches depends on the research problem. If the aim is to understand experiences, qualitative methods are more suitable. If the aim is to measure patterns or test relationships, quantitative methods are appropriate. In many cases, combining both provides the most comprehensive results.

Fill in the blank: The choice between qualitative and quantitative approaches depends on the _____ problem.

Feature	Qualitative Approach	Quantitative Approach
Core Goal	To understand meanings, motivations, and the subjective "why."	To measure variables and identify statistical patterns or trends.
Common Data	Interviews, observations, rehearsal journals, scripts.	Audience surveys, ticket sales, attendance records, demographic data.
Strengths	Offers rich, detailed insights into the <i>experience</i> of the art.	Provides measurable, generalizable data for broader conclusions.
Limitations	Often time-consuming and difficult to replicate across larger populations.	Risks overlooking the nuanced, emotional depth of the performance.

Box 3.1 Comparing qualitative and quantitative approaches



Pilot questions 3.4

1. Define one strength of qualitative approaches in theatre research.
2. State one limitation of quantitative approaches.
3. Fill in the blank: The choice between qualitative and quantitative approaches depends on the _____ problem.
4. Give one example of when qualitative methods are more suitable in theatre research.
5. True or False: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches can provide comprehensive results.

Series Summary

This Series has introduced you to the different approaches to data gathering in theatre and performance research. We began by defining data and explaining its importance as the foundation of credible research. We then explored qualitative approaches such as interviews, focus groups, and observation, which provide rich insights into experiences and meanings. Following that, we examined quantitative approaches including surveys, structured observation, and statistical records, which generate measurable and generalisable data. Finally, we compared both approaches, highlighting their strengths, limitations, and how to choose the most suitable method depending on the research problem.

By engaging with these topics, you have achieved the Series Learning Outcomes. You can now define data, apply qualitative and quantitative approaches to data gathering, compare their strengths and limitations, and select appropriate methods for specific theatre and performance research problems. These skills will enable you to design robust studies that balance depth and breadth of evidence.

Glossary of Terms

- **Data:** Information collected systematically to answer research questions.



- **Field notes:** Written records of observations made during research.
- **Focus group:** A guided discussion with a small group of participants to explore perspectives.
- **Observation:** Watching and recording behaviours, actions, or events in a research context.
- **Quantitative data:** Numerical or statistical information that can be measured and analysed.
- **Qualitative data:** Descriptive or narrative information that captures meanings and experiences.
- **Structured observation:** Observation conducted using a predetermined checklist or framework.
- **Survey:** A structured tool used to collect data from large groups of people.
- **Statistical records:** Existing numerical data such as ticket sales or attendance figures.

Concept Check Questions

Objective questions

1. Fill in the blank: Data refers to information collected _____ to answer research questions. (Linked to SLO 3.1)
2. True or False: Ticket sales are an example of qualitative data. (Linked to SLO 3.1)

Short-answer questions

3. Define interviews and explain their role in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
4. Identify one example of quantitative data used in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 3.3)

Long-answer questions

5. Analyse the strengths and limitations of focus groups in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 3.2)
6. Compare qualitative and quantitative approaches, and explain how a researcher might choose between them. (Linked to SLO 3.4, 3.5)



Answers to Concept Check Questions

Objective questions

1. Systematically.
2. False.

Short-answer questions

3. Interviews are a qualitative method where researchers ask participants questions to gather detailed information. They are useful for exploring experiences, motivations, and interpretations in theatre research.
4. Ticket sales are an example of quantitative data.

Long-answer questions

5. *Basic response:* Focus groups provide diverse perspectives and stimulate discussion, making them useful for exploring audience reactions.

Value-added response: They allow researchers to capture group dynamics and collective meanings, but they may be influenced by dominant voices and require skilled moderation. For example, a focus group discussing community theatre can reveal shared cultural values but may overlook individual differences.

6. *Basic response:* Qualitative approaches provide depth and detail, while quantitative approaches provide measurable and generalisable data.

Value-added response: Researchers choose based on the problem: qualitative methods suit exploratory studies of meaning, while quantitative methods suit studies of patterns and relationships. In theatre research, combining both can provide comprehensive insights, such as observing rehearsals while also surveying audiences.

Answers to Pilot Questions

Part 3.1 Introduction to Data Gathering

1. Data is information collected systematically to answer research questions.



2. Example: Interviews with actors.
3. Evidence.
4. It ensures credibility and supports conclusions.
5. False.

Part 3.2 Qualitative Approaches to Data Gathering

1. Interviews involve asking participants questions to gather detailed information.
2. They provide diverse perspectives and stimulate interaction.
3. Observations.
4. Observing rehearsals to study acting techniques.
5. False.

Part 3.3 Quantitative Approaches to Data Gathering

1. Surveys and questionnaires are structured tools used to collect data from large groups of people.
2. Counting audience laughter during a performance.
3. Audience.
4. They provide measurable and generalisable data.
5. False.

Part 3.4 Comparing Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

1. They provide rich insights into experiences and meanings.
2. They may overlook depth of personal experiences.
3. Research.
4. Studying rehearsal processes through observation.
5. True.



References And Attributions

External Sources

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Flick, U. (2018). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research Methods in Education* (8th ed.). Routledge.

Illustrations

- *Figure 3.1 Types of data in theatre research*
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing qualitative data (interviews, observations) and quantitative data (surveys, ticket sales) with theatre examples.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “qualitative vs quantitative data theatre research OER diagram”
- *Plate 3.1 Researcher recording field notes during rehearsal*
 - AI prompt: “Generate an image of a researcher taking notes while observing a theatre rehearsal.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “researcher observing rehearsal theatre OER image”
- *Table 3.1 Examples of quantitative data sources in theatre research*
 - AI prompt: “Generate a simple table showing examples of quantitative data sources in theatre research with applications.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “quantitative data sources theatre research OER table”
- *Box 3.1 Comparing qualitative and quantitative approaches*



- AI prompt: “Generate a text box comparing qualitative and quantitative approaches in theatre research.”
- Suggested OER search string: “qualitative vs quantitative approaches theatre research OER comparison”

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4 Exploring Archives, Repositories, And Referencing Practices

Series Outline

- **Part 4.1: Introduction to Archives and Repositories**
 - Sub-Part 4.1.1: Meaning of archives in theatre research
 - Sub-Part 4.1.2: Types of repositories and their relevance
- **Part 4.2: Using Archives in Theatre and Performance Research**
 - Sub-Part 4.2.1: Accessing historical documents and scripts
 - Sub-Part 4.2.2: Analysing archival materials for research purposes
- **Part 4.3: Digital Repositories and Online Resources**
 - Sub-Part 4.3.1: Open access repositories
 - Sub-Part 4.3.2: Theatre databases and online collections
- **Part 4.4: Referencing Practices in Research**
 - Sub-Part 4.4.1: Importance of referencing
 - Sub-Part 4.4.2: Common referencing styles (APA, MLA, Chicago)
 - Sub-Part 4.4.3: Avoiding plagiarism through proper citation

Introduction

Archives and repositories are essential resources for theatre and performance research. They preserve scripts, production notes, photographs, and recordings that provide evidence of past practices and performances. In the digital age, repositories also include online databases and collections that make materials accessible globally.

Referencing practices are equally important, as they ensure academic integrity and allow readers to trace sources. Proper referencing avoids plagiarism and strengthens the credibility of research.



This Series introduces learners to archives, repositories, and referencing practices, showing how they support rigorous scholarship in theatre and performance.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 4.1** define archives and repositories and explain their relevance in theatre and performance research,
- **SLO 4.2** access and analyse archival materials for scholarly purposes,
- **SLO 4.3** identify and use digital repositories and online resources,
- **SLO 4.4** apply referencing practices using recognised styles,
- **SLO 4.5** demonstrate academic integrity by avoiding plagiarism through proper citation.

4.1 Introduction To Archives And Repositories

4.1.1 Meaning of archives in theatre research

Archives are collections of historical documents and records preserved for future use. In theatre research, archives may include scripts, production notes, photographs, costumes, stage designs, and recordings of performances. They serve as evidence of past practices and provide materials for scholarly analysis.

Fill in the blank: Archives are collections of historical _____ and records preserved for future use.

4.1.2 Types of repositories and their relevance

Repositories are organised storage systems for research materials. They can be physical (libraries, museums, theatre archives) or digital (online databases, institutional repositories). In



theatre research, repositories ensure that materials are preserved, catalogued, and accessible to scholars.

Fill in the blank: Repositories can be physical or _____, ensuring materials are preserved and accessible.

TYPES OF RESEARCH REPOSITORIES IN THEATRE STUDIES: AN OER MODEL

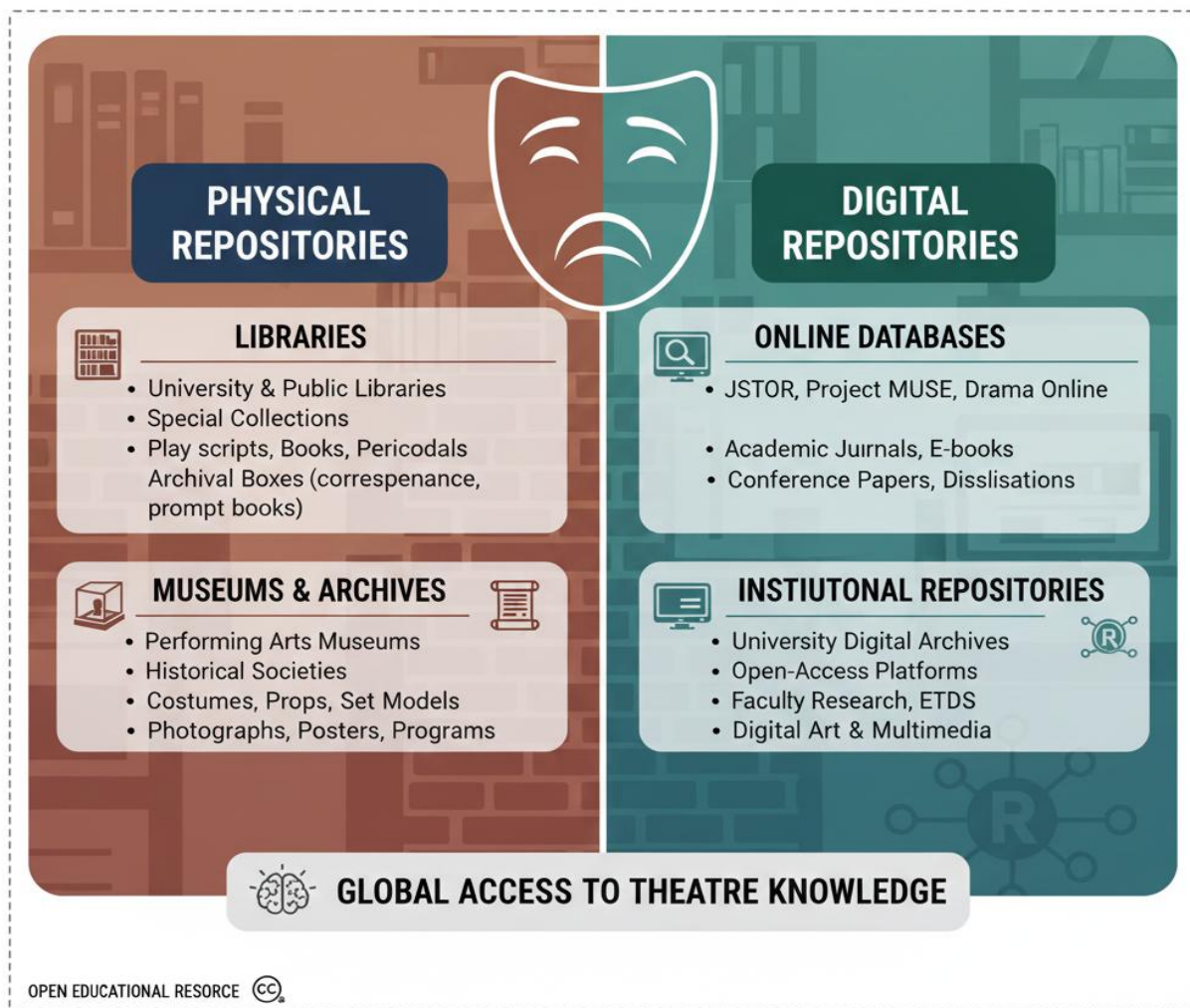


Diagram showing types of repositories: physical (libraries, museums) vs digital (online databases, institutional repositories).

Figure 4.1 Types of repositories in theatre research



Pilot questions 4.1

1. Define archives in the context of theatre research.
2. State one example of archival material used in performance studies.
3. Fill in the blank: Repositories can be physical or _____.
4. Identify one reason why repositories are important in theatre research.
5. True or False: Archives only exist in digital form.

4.2 Using Archives In Theatre And Performance Research

4.2.1 Accessing historical documents and scripts

Researchers use archives to access historical documents such as scripts, letters, and production notes. These materials provide insight into the creative process, cultural context, and performance history. For example, studying Shakespearean prompt books can reveal how plays were staged in different eras.

Fill in the blank: Researchers use archives to access historical documents such as scripts, letters, and _____ notes.

4.2.2 Analysing archival materials for research purposes

Analysing archival materials involves interpreting their meaning, context, and relevance. In theatre research, this may include examining photographs to understand stage design, or listening to recordings to study performance styles. Archival analysis helps reconstruct past practices and informs contemporary scholarship.

Fill in the blank: Analysing archival materials involves interpreting their meaning, _____, and relevance.





Image of a researcher examining old theatre scripts and photographs in an archive room.

Plate 4.1 Researcher working with archival materials

Pilot questions 4.2

1. Define archival analysis in theatre research.
2. State one example of a historical document found in theatre archives.



3. Fill in the blank: Analysing archival materials involves interpreting their meaning, _____, and relevance.
4. Identify one benefit of using archival materials in performance studies.
5. True or False: Archival analysis can help reconstruct past practices.

4.3 Digital Repositories And Online Resources

4.3.1 Open access repositories

Open access repositories are online platforms that provide free access to scholarly materials. In theatre research, these may include digitised scripts, journals, and theses. They expand accessibility by allowing researchers worldwide to consult resources without physical limitations.

Fill in the blank: Open access repositories provide _____ access to scholarly materials online.

4.3.2 Theatre databases and online collections

Specialised **theatre databases** and online collections preserve and share performance materials such as video recordings, stage designs, and production notes. Examples include institutional repositories of universities or cultural organisations. These resources help researchers study performances remotely and compare practices across contexts.

Fill in the blank: Theatre databases preserve and share performance materials such as video recordings, stage designs, and _____ notes.



DIGITAL REPOSITRIES FOR THEATRE RESEARCH

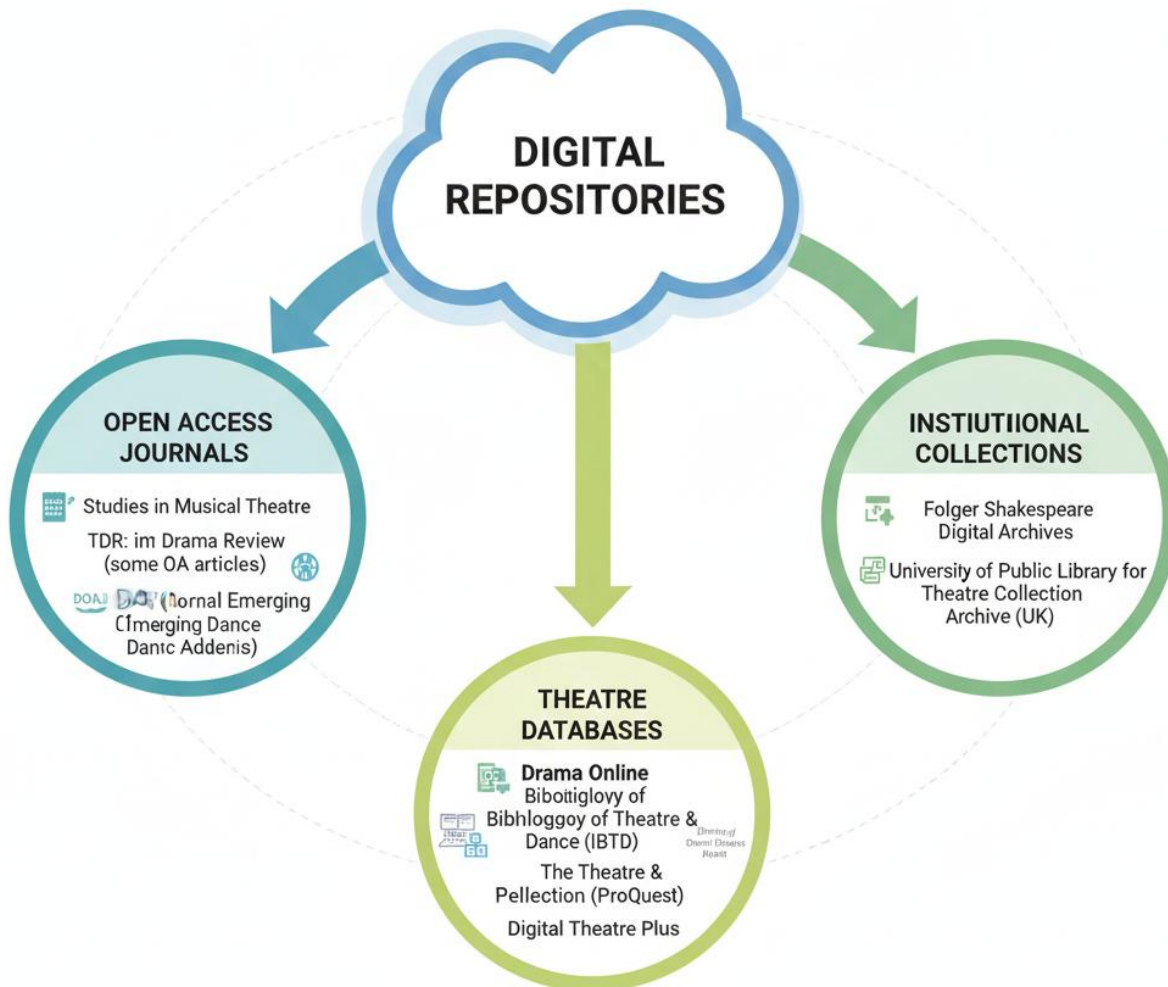


Diagram showing examples of digital repositories: open access journals, theatre databases, institutional collections.

Figure 4.2 Examples of digital repositories in theatre research

Pilot questions 4.3

1. Define open access repositories.
2. State one example of material found in theatre databases.



3. Fill in the blank: Open access repositories provide _____ access to scholarly materials online.
4. Identify one advantage of digital repositories in theatre research.
5. True or False: Digital repositories are limited to physical archives.

4.4 Referencing Practices In Research

4.4.1 Importance of referencing

Referencing acknowledges the sources of information used in research. It ensures academic integrity, allows readers to trace ideas, and strengthens credibility. In theatre research, referencing is essential when citing scripts, reviews, or scholarly articles.

Fill in the blank: Referencing acknowledges the _____ of information used in research.

4.4.2 Common referencing styles (APA, MLA, Chicago)

Different disciplines use different referencing styles. In humanities and theatre studies, **MLA** and **Chicago** are common, while **APA** is widely used in social sciences. Each style has rules for citing books, articles, and digital sources.

Fill in the blank: MLA, APA, and Chicago are common _____ styles used in research.

4.4.3 Avoiding plagiarism through proper citation

Plagiarism occurs when ideas or words are used without proper acknowledgment. Proper citation prevents plagiarism by giving credit to original authors. In theatre research, citing sources ensures respect for intellectual property and maintains scholarly honesty.

Fill in the blank: Proper citation prevents _____ by giving credit to original authors.



Style	Primarily Used In	Focus of Citation
MLA	Humanities, Literature, Theatre Studies	Emphasizes the author and the specific page number; ideal for analyzing texts and scripts.
Chicago	History, Humanities, Arts	Uses footnotes or endnotes; preferred for detailed, descriptive analysis and archival research.
APA	Social Sciences, Applied Theatre	Emphasizes the author and date; commonly used for studies on audience psychology or arts education.

Box 4.1 Common referencing styles and their uses

Pilot questions 4.4

1. Define referencing in research.
2. State one reason why referencing is important.
3. Fill in the blank: Proper citation prevents _____ by giving credit to original authors.
4. Identify one referencing style commonly used in theatre studies.
5. True or False: Plagiarism occurs when sources are properly cited.



Series Summary

This Series has explored the role of archives, repositories, and referencing practices in theatre and performance research. We began by defining archives and repositories, highlighting their importance in preserving scripts, production notes, and recordings. We then examined how researchers access and analyse archival materials to reconstruct past practices and inform contemporary scholarship. Following this, we considered digital repositories and online resources, including open access platforms and theatre databases, which expand accessibility and support global collaboration. Finally, we discussed referencing practices, emphasising the importance of citation, common styles such as APA, MLA, and Chicago, and the need to avoid plagiarism.

By engaging with these topics, you have achieved the Series Learning Outcomes. You can now define archives and repositories, access and analyse archival materials, identify and use digital repositories, apply referencing practices using recognised styles, and demonstrate academic integrity through proper citation. These skills will strengthen your ability to conduct rigorous and credible theatre and performance research.

Glossary of Terms

- **Archive:** A collection of historical documents and records preserved for future use.
- **Chicago style:** A referencing style commonly used in history and humanities.
- **Digital repository:** An online platform that stores and provides access to scholarly materials.
- **MLA style:** A referencing style widely used in humanities, literature, and theatre studies.
- **Open access repository:** An online platform that provides free access to scholarly materials.
- **Plagiarism:** Using another person's ideas or words without proper acknowledgment.
- **Production notes:** Written records of decisions and processes during a theatre production.



- **Referencing:** A practice of acknowledging sources of information used in research.
- **Repository:** An organised storage system for research materials, either physical or digital.
- **Script:** The written text of a play or performance.

Concept Check Questions

Objective questions

1. Fill in the blank: Archives are collections of historical _____ and records preserved for future use. (Linked to SLO 4.1)
2. True or False: MLA is a referencing style commonly used in theatre studies. (Linked to SLO 4.4)

Short-answer questions

3. Define repositories and explain their relevance in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 4.1)
4. Identify one advantage of using digital repositories in performance studies. (Linked to SLO 4.3)

Long-answer questions

5. Analyse the benefits and challenges of using archival materials in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 4.2)
6. Compare APA, MLA, and Chicago referencing styles, and explain why proper citation is essential in theatre research. (Linked to SLO 4.4, 4.5)

Answers to Concept Check Questions

Objective questions

1. Documents.
2. True.

Short-answer questions

3. Repositories are organised storage systems for research materials, either physical or digital.



They are relevant because they preserve, catalogue, and make materials accessible to scholars.

4. Digital repositories expand accessibility by allowing researchers worldwide to consult resources remotely.

Long-answer questions

5. *Basic response:* Archival materials provide evidence of past practices and enrich theatre research.

Value-added response: They allow researchers to reconstruct historical performances and cultural contexts, but challenges include limited access, preservation issues, and incomplete records. For example, studying old scripts may reveal staging practices but may lack accompanying performance details.

6. *Basic response:* APA is used in social sciences, MLA in humanities, and Chicago in history and humanities. Proper citation ensures academic integrity.

Value-added response: Each style has distinct rules for citing sources, and choosing the right style depends on disciplinary conventions. Proper citation avoids plagiarism, respects intellectual property, and strengthens credibility. In theatre research, referencing ensures that interpretations of scripts, reviews, or archival materials are traceable and verifiable.

Answers to Pilot Questions

Part 4.1 Introduction to Archives and Repositories

1. Archives are collections of historical documents and records preserved for future use.
2. Example: Production notes.
3. Digital.
4. They preserve and make materials accessible to scholars.
5. False.

Part 4.2 Using Archives in Theatre and Performance Research

1. Archival analysis involves interpreting the meaning, context, and relevance of materials.



2. Example: Historical scripts.
3. Context.
4. They help reconstruct past practices and inform scholarship.
5. True.

Part 4.3 Digital Repositories and Online Resources

1. Open access repositories are online platforms that provide free access to scholarly materials.
2. Example: Video recordings of performances.
3. Free.
4. They expand accessibility globally.
5. False.

Part 4.4 Referencing Practices in Research

1. Referencing is the practice of acknowledging sources of information used in research.
2. It ensures academic integrity and credibility.
3. Plagiarism.
4. MLA.
5. False.



References and Attributions

External Sources

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social Research Methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Gibaldi, J. (2016). *MLA Handbook* (8th ed.). Modern Language Association.

Illustrations

- *Figure 4.1 Types of repositories in theatre research*
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing physical repositories (libraries, museums) and digital repositories (online databases, institutional repositories).”
 - Suggested OER search string: “types of repositories theatre research OER diagram”
- *Plate 4.1 Researcher working with archival materials*
 - AI prompt: “Generate an image of a researcher examining old theatre scripts and photographs in an archive room.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “researcher examining theatre archives OER image”
- *Figure 4.2 Examples of digital repositories in theatre research*
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing examples of digital repositories including open access journals, theatre databases, and institutional collections.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “digital repositories theatre research OER diagram”
- *Box 4.1 Common referencing styles and their uses*
 - AI prompt: “Generate a text box showing common referencing styles (APA, MLA, Chicago) and their uses.”



- Suggested OER search string: “referencing styles APA MLA Chicago theatre research OER comparison”

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Series 5: Proposal Writing, Ethics, and Defending Original Research

Series Title and Outline

- **Part 5.1: Understanding Research Proposals**
 - 5.1.1 Purpose and structure of a proposal
 - 5.1.2 Key components (title, objectives, methodology, timeline)
- **Part 5.2: Writing Effective Research Proposals**
 - 5.2.1 Crafting clear research questions
 - 5.2.2 Presenting methodology and expected outcomes
 - 5.2.3 Ensuring clarity, coherence, and feasibility
- **Part 5.3: Research Ethics in Theatre and Performance Studies**
 - 5.3.1 Principles of ethical research
 - 5.3.2 Informed consent and confidentiality
 - 5.3.3 Avoiding bias and respecting cultural contexts
- **Part 5.4: Defending Original Research**
 - 5.4.1 Preparing for oral defence
 - 5.4.2 Responding to questions and critiques
 - 5.4.3 Demonstrating originality and contribution to knowledge

Introduction

Writing a research proposal is often the first major step in any scholarly journey. It sets out the plan, convinces others of the project's value, and provides a roadmap for the researcher. In theatre and performance studies, proposals must be carefully structured to communicate objectives, methodologies, and expected contributions. Alongside this, ethical considerations are vital to ensure respect for participants, cultural contexts, and intellectual property. Finally,



defending original research requires confidence, preparation, and the ability to demonstrate scholarly contribution.

The aim of this Series is to equip you with the skills to design credible proposals, apply ethical principles, and defend your research effectively.

We shall commence this Series by examining the purpose and structure of research proposals, including their key components. Next, we will explore how to write effective proposals, focusing on crafting clear questions, presenting methodologies, and ensuring feasibility. Following that, we will consider research ethics, looking at principles such as informed consent, confidentiality, and cultural respect. Finally, we will conclude by discussing how to defend original research, including preparation for oral defence, responding to critiques, and demonstrating originality.

Series Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this Series, you should be able to:

- **SLO 5.1** explain the purpose and structure of a research proposal,
- **SLO 5.2** identify and describe the key components of a proposal,
- **SLO 5.3** formulate clear and focused research questions,
- **SLO 5.4** present methodologies and expected outcomes in a coherent manner,
- **SLO 5.5** apply principles of ethical research in theatre and performance studies,
- **SLO 5.6** demonstrate how to obtain informed consent and maintain confidentiality,
- **SLO 5.7** evaluate strategies for avoiding bias and respecting cultural contexts,
- **SLO 5.8** prepare effectively for oral defence of research,
- **SLO 5.9** respond constructively to questions and critiques during defence,
- **SLO 5.10** demonstrate originality and articulate the contribution of research to knowledge.



5.1 Understanding Research Proposals

5.1.1 Purpose and structure of a proposal

A **research proposal** is a formal plan that outlines the intended study. Its purpose is to convince supervisors, committees, or funding bodies that the project is worthwhile, feasible, and academically sound. In theatre and performance studies, proposals demonstrate how the research will contribute to knowledge and practice.

Typical structure includes:

- Title
- Introduction and background
- Research problem and objectives
- Methodology
- Timeline and resources
- Expected outcomes

Fill in the blank: A research proposal is a formal _____ that outlines the intended study.

5.1.2 Key components (title, objectives, methodology, timeline)

Each component of a proposal plays a vital role:

- **Title:** Concise and informative, reflecting the essence of the study.
- **Objectives:** Clear statements of what the research aims to achieve.
- **Methodology:** Explanation of how data will be gathered and analysed.
- **Timeline:** A schedule showing stages of the research and completion dates.

Fill in the blank: The _____ of a proposal explains how data will be gathered and analysed.



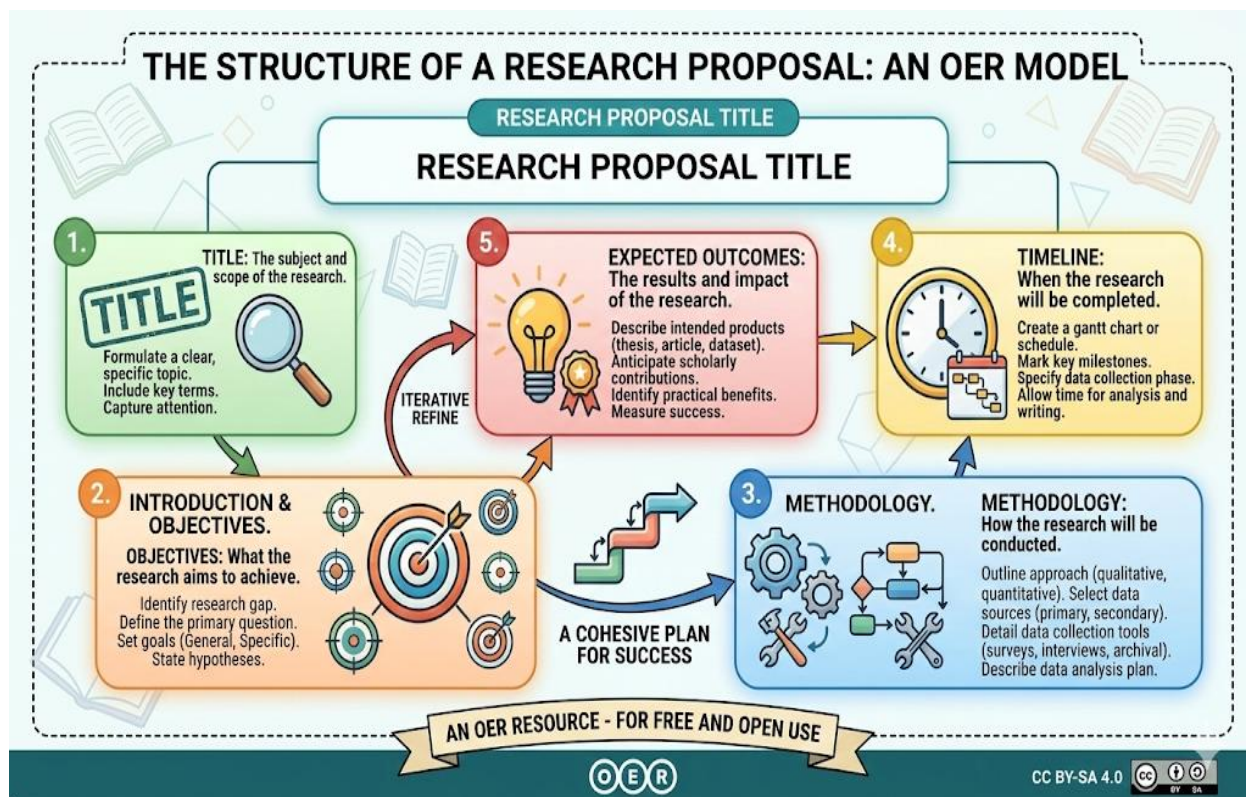


Diagram showing the structure of a research proposal with labelled components.

Figure 5.1 Structure of a research proposal

Pilot questions 5.1

1. Define a research proposal.
2. State one purpose of a research proposal.
3. Fill in the blank: The _____ of a proposal explains how data will be gathered and analysed.
4. Identify two key components of a research proposal.
5. True or False: A research proposal is only written after completing the research.

5.2 Writing Effective Research Proposals

5.2.1 Crafting clear research questions



Research questions guide the entire study. They must be specific, focused, and researchable. In theatre research, a good question might be: *How do community theatre practices influence social cohesion in Lagos?*

Fill in the blank: Research questions must be specific, focused, and _____.

5.2.2 Presenting methodology and expected outcomes

The methodology section should explain the chosen approach (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) and justify why it is suitable. Expected outcomes should indicate the contribution to knowledge or practice, such as new insights into performance traditions or audience engagement.

Fill in the blank: Expected outcomes should indicate the contribution to _____ or practice.

5.2.3 Ensuring clarity, coherence, and feasibility

An effective proposal must be clear, logically organised, and feasible within the available time and resources. Clarity ensures that reviewers understand the plan, coherence ensures that all parts connect, and feasibility ensures that the project can realistically be completed.

Fill in the blank: An effective proposal must be clear, logically organised, and _____ within the available time and resources.





Image of a student drafting a research proposal with notes and a laptop.

Plate 5.1 Student drafting a research proposal

Pilot questions 5.2

1. State one characteristic of a good research question.
2. Give one example of an expected outcome in theatre research.



3. Fill in the blank: Expected outcomes should indicate the contribution to _____ or practice.
4. Identify one reason why feasibility is important in proposal writing.
5. True or False: A proposal should be logically organised and coherent.

5.3 Research Ethics In Theatre And Performance Studies

5.3.1 Principles of ethical research

Ethical research is guided by principles such as respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. In theatre studies, this means treating participants fairly, ensuring their well-being, and distributing benefits of research equitably.

Fill in the blank: Ethical research is guided by principles such as respect for persons, _____, and justice.

5.3.2 Informed consent and confidentiality

Informed consent requires that participants understand the purpose, risks, and benefits of the research before agreeing to take part. **Confidentiality** ensures that personal information is protected and identities are not disclosed without permission. In theatre research, this may involve safeguarding interviews with actors or community members.

Fill in the blank: Informed consent requires that participants understand the purpose, risks, and _____ of the research before agreeing to take part.

5.3.3 Avoiding bias and respecting cultural contexts

Researchers must avoid bias by ensuring neutrality and fairness in data collection and analysis. Respecting cultural contexts means acknowledging traditions, values, and sensitivities in theatre practices. For example, documenting indigenous performance requires sensitivity to cultural ownership and meaning.



Fill in the blank: Respecting cultural contexts means acknowledging traditions, values, and _____ in theatre practices.

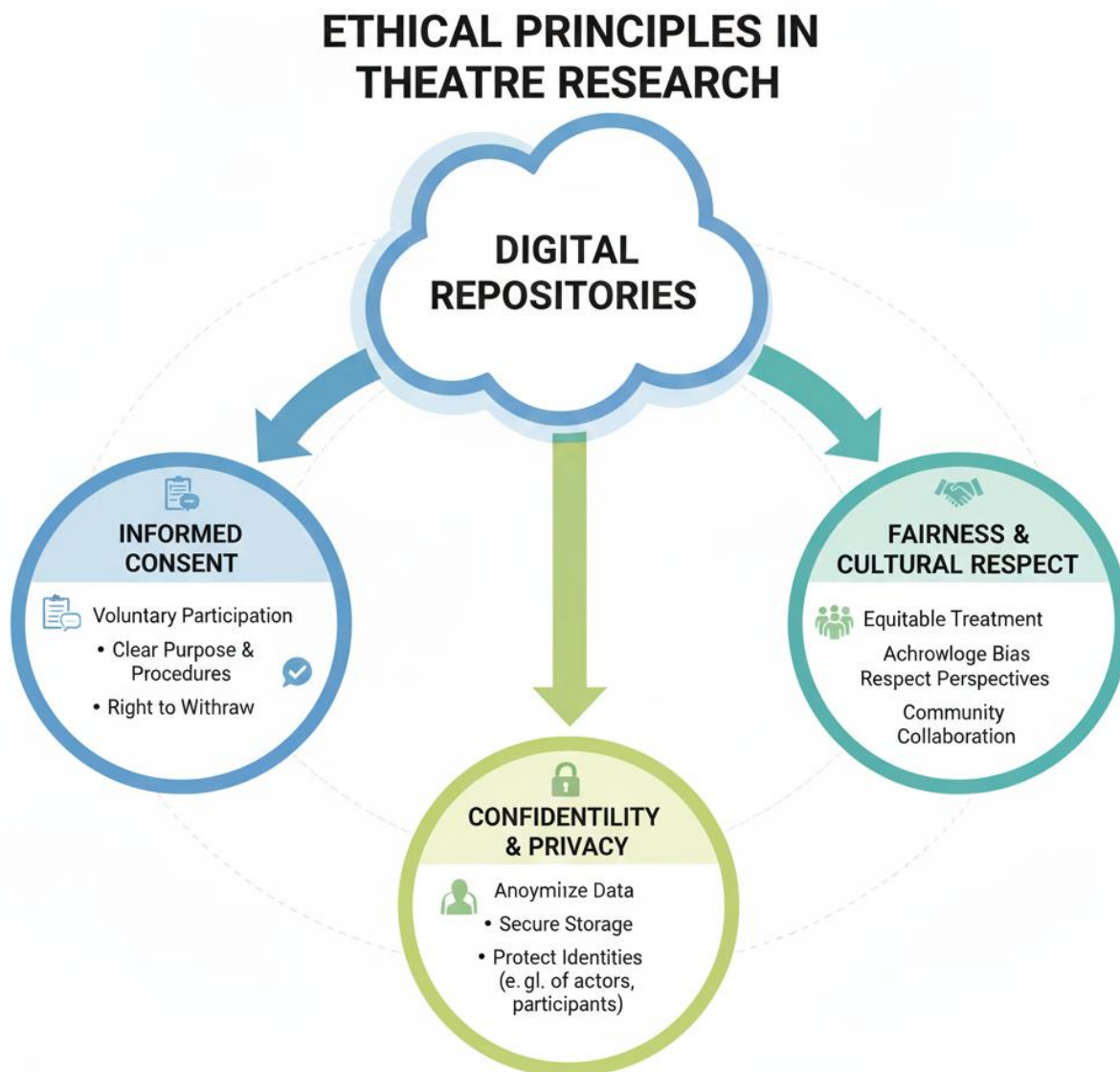


Diagram showing ethical principles in research: informed consent, confidentiality, fairness, cultural respect.

Figure 5.2 Principles of ethical research in theatre studies



Pilot questions 5.3

1. State one principle of ethical research.
2. Define informed consent.
3. Fill in the blank: Respecting cultural contexts means acknowledging traditions, values, and _____.
4. Identify one reason why confidentiality is important in theatre research.
5. True or False: Avoiding bias is part of ethical research practice.

5.4 Defending Original Research

5.4.1 Preparing for oral defence

Preparation involves reviewing the proposal and completed research thoroughly, anticipating possible questions, and practising clear presentation. In theatre studies, this may include explaining methodological choices or the significance of findings.

Fill in the blank: Preparation for oral defence involves reviewing the proposal and completed _____ thoroughly.

5.4.2 Responding to questions and critiques

During defence, researchers must respond confidently and constructively to questions. Critiques should be addressed respectfully, showing awareness of limitations and justifying decisions. This demonstrates maturity and scholarly competence.

Fill in the blank: During defence, researchers must respond confidently and _____ to questions.

5.4.3 Demonstrating originality and contribution to knowledge

Defending research requires showing how the study is original and contributes to knowledge. In theatre research, originality may lie in exploring new performance traditions, applying



innovative methodologies, or offering fresh interpretations. Contribution means adding value to scholarship and practice.

Fill in the blank: Defending research requires showing how the study is _____ and contributes to knowledge.



Image of a student presenting research findings to a panel.

Plate 5.2 Student defending research before a panel



Pilot questions 5.4

1. State one step in preparing for oral defence.
2. Define how a researcher should respond to critiques during defence.
3. Fill in the blank: Defending research requires showing how the study is _____ and contributes to knowledge.
4. Identify one example of originality in theatre research.
5. True or False: Responding respectfully to critiques demonstrates scholarly competence.

Series Summary

This Series has focused on the essential skills of proposal writing, ethical research practice, and defending original research in theatre and performance studies. We began by examining the purpose and structure of research proposals, identifying their key components such as title, objectives, methodology, and timeline. We then explored how to write effective proposals, emphasising the importance of clear research questions, coherent methodology, and feasible outcomes. Following that, we considered research ethics, including principles of informed consent, confidentiality, fairness, and respect for cultural contexts. Finally, we discussed strategies for defending original research, covering preparation for oral defence, responding to critiques, and demonstrating originality and contribution to knowledge.

By engaging with these topics, you have achieved the Series Learning Outcomes. You can now explain the purpose and structure of proposals, write effective and feasible research plans, apply ethical principles in theatre and performance studies, and prepare to defend your research with confidence. These skills will enable you to design credible projects, conduct responsible scholarship, and present your work effectively to academic audiences.

Glossary of Terms



- **Beneficence:** An ethical principle requiring researchers to maximise benefits and minimise harm to participants.
- **Confidentiality:** Protecting personal information and ensuring identities are not disclosed without consent.
- **Defence:** The formal presentation and justification of research before a panel or committee.
- **Feasibility:** The practicality of completing a research project within available time and resources.
- **Informed consent:** Agreement by participants to take part in research after understanding its purpose, risks, and benefits.
- **Justice:** An ethical principle requiring fairness in the distribution of research benefits and burdens.
- **Methodology:** The section of a proposal that explains how data will be collected and analysed.
- **Proposal:** A formal plan outlining the intended research study.
- **Research question:** A specific, focused, and researchable query that guides a study.
- **Timeline:** A schedule showing stages of research and expected completion dates.



Concept Check Questions

Objective questions

1. Fill in the blank: A research proposal is a formal _____ that outlines the intended study.
(Linked to SLO 5.1)
2. True or False: Informed consent requires participants to understand the purpose, risks, and benefits of research before agreeing to take part. (Linked to SLO 5.5)

Short-answer questions

3. Define feasibility in the context of proposal writing. (Linked to SLO 5.4)
4. Identify one principle of ethical research in theatre studies. (Linked to SLO 5.5)

Long-answer questions

5. Analyse the importance of crafting clear research questions in proposal writing. (Linked to SLO 5.3)
6. Evaluate strategies for preparing and responding during an oral defence of research. (Linked to SLO 5.8, 5.9)

Answers to Concept Check Questions

Objective questions

1. Plan.
2. True.

Short-answer questions

3. Feasibility refers to the practicality of completing a research project within the available time, resources, and scope.
4. Respect for persons is one principle of ethical research.

Long-answer questions

5. *Basic response*: Clear research questions provide focus and direction for the study.
Value-added response: They ensure that objectives are specific and researchable, prevent



ambiguity, and guide methodology. In theatre research, a well-crafted question such as “How do community theatre practices influence social cohesion?” ensures relevance and clarity.

6. *Basic response*: Preparing involves reviewing the proposal thoroughly and anticipating questions. Responding requires confidence and respect.

Value-added response: Effective strategies include practising presentations, anticipating critiques, and demonstrating awareness of limitations. Responding constructively shows scholarly maturity. In theatre research, this may involve justifying methodological choices or explaining the originality of findings.

Answers to Pilot Questions

Part 5.1 Understanding Research Proposals

1. A research proposal is a formal plan outlining the intended study.
2. To convince others of the project’s value and feasibility.
3. Methodology.
4. Title and objectives.
5. False.

Part 5.2 Writing Effective Research Proposals

1. Specific and focused.
2. New insights into performance traditions.
3. Knowledge.
4. It ensures the project can realistically be completed.
5. True.



Part 5.3 Research Ethics in Theatre and Performance Studies

1. Respect for persons.
2. Informed consent means participants understand the purpose, risks, and benefits before agreeing.
3. Sensitivities.
4. It protects participants' identities and personal information.
5. True.

Part 5.4 Defending Original Research

1. Reviewing the proposal and completed research thoroughly.
2. Respond confidently and constructively.
3. Original.
4. Exploring new performance traditions.
5. True.



References and Attributions

External Sources

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
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- Israel, M., & Hay, I. (2006). *Research Ethics for Social Scientists*. Sage Publications.

Illustrations

- *Figure 5.1 Structure of a research proposal*
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing the structure of a research proposal with title, objectives, methodology, timeline, and expected outcomes.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “research proposal structure diagram OER”
- *Plate 5.1 Student drafting a research proposal*
 - AI prompt: “Generate an image of a student drafting a research proposal with notes and a laptop.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “student writing research proposal OER image”
- *Figure 5.2 Principles of ethical research in theatre studies*
 - AI prompt: “Create a diagram showing ethical principles in research including informed consent, confidentiality, fairness, and cultural respect.”
 - Suggested OER search string: “ethical principles theatre research OER diagram”
- *Plate 5.2 Student defending research before a panel*
 - AI prompt: “Generate an image of a student presenting research findings to a panel in an academic defence setting.”



- Suggested OER search string: “student oral defence research OER image”

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All illustration prompts were designed for AI generation and are not sourced from copyrighted material. Suggested search strings are intended to help learners locate open educational resources (OERs) that provide similar diagrams, tables, or images.

