

Designing a Study

Sociology

The order of decisions that turns a curiosity into a study you can defend.

Method comes last. It is chosen by everything above it.

1

State the question

One sentence, answerable, naming a population and a time.

2

Site it in the literature

What is already known, and the specific gap you are filling.

3

Choose a perspective

Explaining a rate and understanding a meaning need different designs.

4

Operationalise

Turn each concept into something observable, and justify the step.

5

Pick sample and method

Who, how many, how reached, and what could bias that reach.

6

Clear ethics, then pilot

Approval first; a small pilot finds the questions that do not work.

A design flaw cannot be fixed at the analysis stage. The cheapest correction is always the earliest one.