

Step # 1: Unpacking your research concept

What will your study focus on?

This study will look at ...

Why is your study important? Why is your study needed?

What has other researchers done in the area under study?

Reference	Short summary of study

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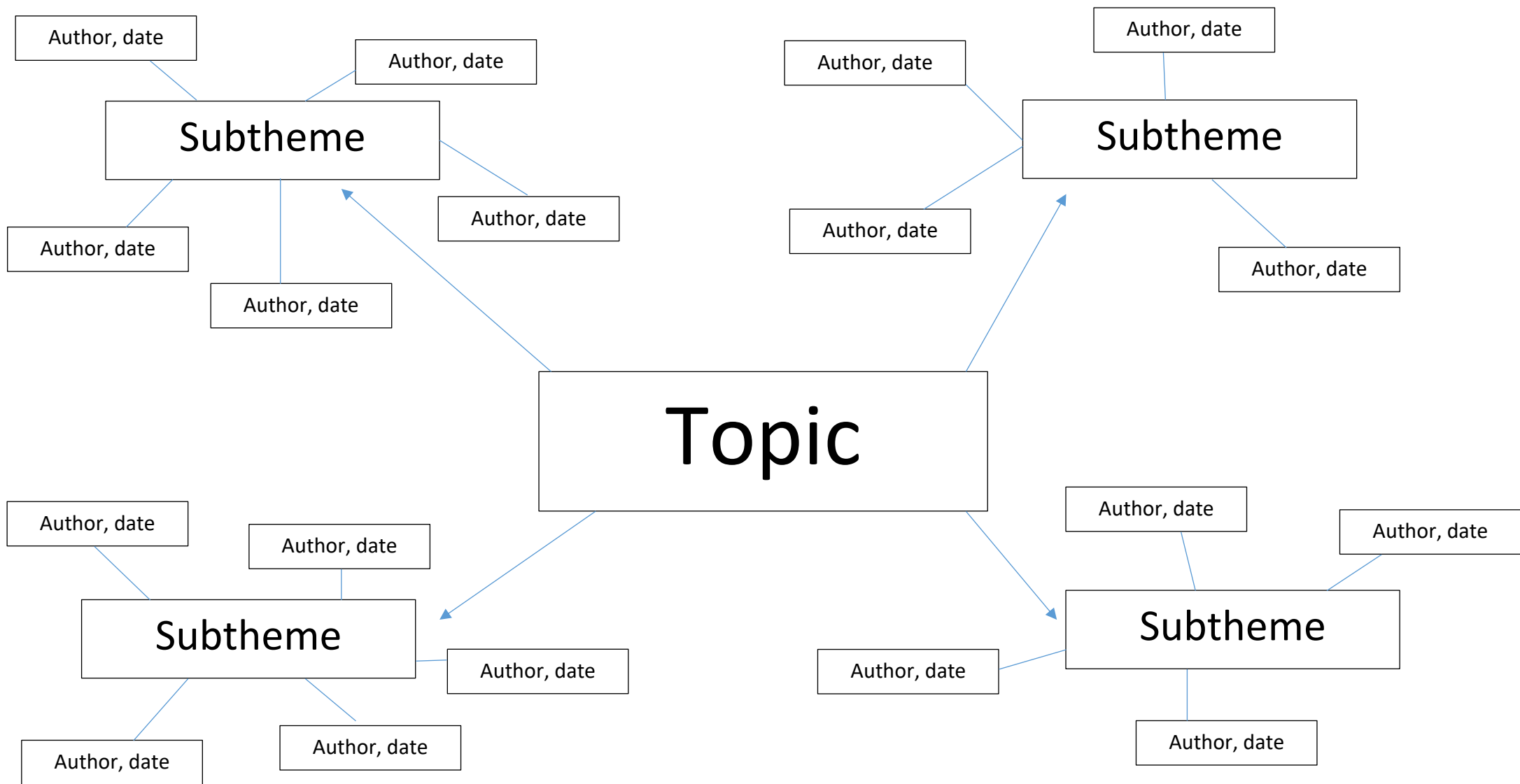
What type of data do you need to answer your research question?

Where and how will you get the data needed to answer your research question?

Preliminary sample size (# of participants):

Research participants:

Do you have access to the participants? If no, how will you get access?



Literature concept map

Step # 3: Constructing your introduction

First paragraph

- Start with strong opening sentence to draw the reader in.
- The first paragraph 'sets the scene' for the rest of the section.

Second and third paragraph (depending on length of proposal)

- Describe your central research problem.
- What is the historical backdrop to your study?
- Is your research at the cutting edge of your field? In what way?
- Are you looking into a previously researched area, but using a new approach?
- Who are the key players in the field? Does their research findings support your hypothesis? Remember to include and cite authors doing work in your topic area.

Fourth paragraph

- Why is your research important?

Last paragraph(s)

- How are you going to address the research problem?

Example: Introduction

Power issues within sport for development (SfD) have been the focus of researchers over the last decade (Adams & Harris, 2014; Blom et al., 2015; Darnell & Hayhurst, 2011; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Kang & Svensson, 2019; Wilson & Hayhurst, 2009). The inherent nature of sport for development (SfD) programs and initiatives provided by nonprofits as 'free' has resulted in their labelling as 'charity organisations'. Consequently, SfD delivery organisations are reliant on funding for programs from an external source, such as an international development partner (Webb & Richelieu, 2016). The charity label combined with a reliance on resources from external partners inevitably suggest an imbalance of power and expertise of partners (Barnes et al, 2018; Filo et al., 2015).

Even though interorganisational power has been explored in SfD literature, the majority of research has focused on partnership based relationships, including interorganisational power between funding agency and delivery partner; between evaluation team and delivery partner (Rosso & McGrath, 2017) and between the delivery partner and community members. This study will contribute to the body of knowledge on interorganisational power in SfD by exploring interorganisational power in a transcontinental SfD network and more specifically, the impact of that power on member organisation's capacity to collaborate.

Power is often perceived to be held by funding organisations, however, the service delivery organisations also hold power in the form of knowledge on local systems and communities (Harris & Adams, 2016; Welty Peachey et al., 2018). Positions of power are furthermore held by established nonprofits within a network in the form of connections to funding, experience and knowledge. Organisations holding peripheral positions in a network find it difficult to develop expertise and to therefore build capital (Barnes et al, 2018; Blom et al, 2015).

Svensson et al. (2017) highlight that, even though empirical research have focused on community sport clubs, research on nonprofit organisations that do not have paying customers

remained scarce. In addition to this identified gap in literature, Sherry et al. (2015) suggest the management of international networks and local capacity as space for further exploration.

Using a power dependency theoretical lens with social network analysis (SNA) as methodological approach this study will explore the interorganisational power within the Nike Sport for Social Change network in an attempt to address the following question: How does the distribution of interorganisational power in a sport for development network impact on the capacity of members to collaborate?

Step # 3: Writing your problem statement

Paragraph 1: The context of the problem

- What is known about the problem?
- What is the best case scenario for the problem?

Paragraph 2: The problem

- What is the problem?
- What will happen if the problem is not addressed?

Paragraph 3: The importance of your research

- Why is it important that we know more?
- How will your research allow others to know more about this?
- How will your research contribute to understanding/resolving the problem?

Example: Problem statement

Sustainable sport and recreation interventions play a vital role in addressing barriers to physical activity participation experienced by persons with disabilities (Rasmussen et al., 2015). Research has shown that benefits of such interventions include the acquisition and mastering of new skills, developing self-awareness, building sustainable relationships, living an active and healthy lifestyle, active participation in society and psychosocial well-being. Access to sport and recreation furthermore contributes to the overall quality of life of people living with a disability.

Context

Sport and recreation service provision for persons with disabilities in developing countries such as South Africa currently use an individual focus to the treatment of disabilities. This approach, however, excludes and limits accessibility to the majority of people living with a disability. People with a disability residing in low socio-economic, rural communities do not have access to individualised services due to location and affordability. A change to a community-level intervention approach will facilitate the inclusion of people with a disability in lower socio-economic communities in physical activity opportunities.

Problem

This study will explore how a holistic approach that reflects both the complexity of disabilities as well as the need for community level interventions may increase access to participation in physical activity opportunities. Understanding the interplay between individual, community, and societal factors in providing sport and recreation services to people with disabilities in lower socio-economic communities will facilitate the development of a community level model of service provision. This study proposes a socio ecological approach to disability interventions in South Africa and asks the question: *How can a socio ecological approach to sport and recreation service delivery for people with disabilities in lower socio-economic communities in South Africa increase accessibility to physical activity opportunities?*

Your research

Step #5: Writing your research question, aim and objectives

1. Research question

- Go back to your Step #1 document's answer to 'What will your study look at?'

- Identify the variables in your answer.
 - For example, you want to look at the mental health of young people after extended periods of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - Your variables:
 - Mental health
 - Young people
 - Online learning
 - Covid-19 pandemic

- At this stage your topic is still broad and general. You now want to narrow some of your variables down, for example:
 - Mental health: anxiety or depression
 - Young people: specify an age group, e.g. year 10 – 12 students

- You now have to decide whether you want to test the relationship between the variables, or if you want to compare groups. You can also decide that you want to ask a qualitative question, for example, 'How has the extended online learning as result of Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns impacted on the anxiety levels of year 10 – 12 students?'

2. Aim

- Take your research question and write it as an aim.

3. Objectives

- What actions do you need to achieve your aim?
- Often written as 'to...'

Step #6: Writing your research methodology section

Summary of research methodology

	Qualitative approaches	Quantitative approaches
Sampling	Small, purposeful Non-probability; purposeful; convenience	Large, random Probability sampling (simple random/ systematic/ stratified/ cluster)
Strategies of inquiry	Ethnography; grounded theory; phenomenology; case study; narrative.	Experiments; existing data
Data collection techniques	Interviews/ semi-structured interviews; focus groups; documentary data; observation; audio-visual materials	Questionnaires, scales, tests, checklists
Data analysis	Inductive Content analysis; Narrative analysis; Thematic analysis	Deductive Statistical analysis methods depending on your data
Data analysis tools	Atlas ti	SPSS (newest version)

1. Your research question

2. Research design

- Which of the three research designs will allow you to collect data to answer your research question?

- Using your research textbook, (i) describe the selected design and (ii) describe why your study will be using the design.

3. Study sample

- Now that you have selected a study design, you can turn your attention to deciding on what your sample will look like.
- Shortly describe the sample that will provide you with the data needed to answer your research question.

- Which of the sampling techniques in your selected study design will help you to recruit participants?

- Using your research textbook, describe this sampling method. Also describe how you will use the technique to select your participant sample.

4. Data analysis

- Select a data analysis technique that will allow you to analyse your collected data.
 - Qualitative data analysis: use thematic analysis for interview and focus group data. If you are looking at how participants construct a story or narrative from their experience, use narrative analysis.
 - Quantitative data analysis: describe the analysis that will be done for your data. Talk to a statistician if you have not attempted this before.

Step #7: Writing your ethical considerations

1. Voluntary participation

- How will you ensure that participants are aware that participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time?

2. No harm or risk to participants

- Identify potential risks or harm that may be caused by participating in your study

- How will you mitigate these?

3. Informed consent and assent

- How will you obtain informed consent (and assent from participants under the age of 18 years)?

4. Anonymity and confidentiality

- Are you going to provide participants with a anonymity and confidentiality? Keep in mind that you cannot provide anonymity to participants in a qualitative study.
- If yes, describe how you will do this.

5. Storage of data

- How will you ensure that collected data with the private information of participants will be securely stored?