**Research Methodology Flow**

**1. Research Paradigm**

Epistemology: Constructivist – Knowledge is co-constructed between researcher and participants through interpretation and interaction.

Ontology: Relativist – Reality is subjective and context-dependent, shaped by cultural and professional perspectives in Singapore’s communication design industry.

**2. Research Questions & Aims**

**Research Question:**

How can we increase creative integrity by addressing visual plagiarism in Art & Design?

a. For local and international Art & Design teaching and research faculty

b. For Singapore’s Communication Design Industry

**Project Aims:**

1. **Investigate** the current understanding of visual plagiarism issues and identify assumptions underlying creative integrity among:

a) Local and international Art & Design teaching and research faculty

b) Industry practitioners in Singapore’s Communication Design Industry

2**. Identify and codify** ways higher education establishments and creative industry leaders can support faculty and practitioners in addressing visual plagiarism and promoting creative integrity.

3. **Develop and disseminate** recommendations for promoting creative integrity in Art & Design education and practice, enhancing ethical awareness and the responsible production and consumption of images.

**3. Research Design**

Methodological Approach: Qualitative, exploratory research

Data Collection Method: Semi-structured interviews

Sampling Strategy: Snowball sampling

Sample Size & Participant Criteria:

Junior Designers: 10–15 participants (21+ years, 1–3 years of experience)

Midweight Designers: 10–15 participants (21+ years, 4–6 years of experience)

Senior Designers: 10–15 participants (21+ years, 7+ years of experience)

Eligibility: Singaporean citizens or Permanent Residents

Focus: Industry and cultural specifics of the Singaporean communication design industry

**4. Justification for Methodological Choices**

**Semi-Structured Interviews:**

**Gap in Research**: No prior study has explored this topic, making interviews an effective method to establish a baseline understanding.

**Flexibility:** Allows for open-ended discussion, uncovering nuanced insights into assumptions, ethical perceptions, and practices.

**Depth of Data:** Captures subjective experiences and context-dependent perspectives, aligning with constructivist epistemology and relativist ontology.

**Snowball Sampling:**

**Access & Feasibility:** The Research team has access to junior designers through professional networks, making them an ideal starting point for recruitment.

**Industry Structure:** Junior designers work closely with midweight and senior designers, making this method effective for expanding participation.

**Trust & Credibility:** Given the small, interconnected design industry, peer recommendations build trust and encourage candid participation.

**5. Data Collection Process**

Interview Format: Semi-structured

Interview Guide: Open-ended questions exploring experiences, challenges, and insights into Singapore’s design industry

Data Recording: Zoom video and audio recordings

Ethical Considerations: Informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality

**6. Data Analysis**

Analytical Approach: Reflexive thematic analysis

Coding Process:

Open Coding: Identifying emerging themes from raw data

Axial Coding: Establishing relationships between themes

Selective Coding: Refining core themes and insights

Software: MAXQDA or manual coding (undecided)

Triangulation for Validity:

Multiple Coding Strategies: Comparison between human-coded and AI-assisted coding

Team Coding: Collaboration to ensure consistency

Member Checking: Validating findings with participants

**7. Interpretation and Knowledge Production**

**Application of Findings:** Insights will inform the development of a book

**Target Audience:** Design professionals in Singapore

**Outcome:** A book synthesising key themes, challenges, and reflections, structured using multiple approaches (e.g., case studies, thematic insights, guidebook-style content)

**8. Positionality Statement**

Researcher as an Insider: As a design professional in Singapore, the researcher has deep contextual understanding of industry norms and practices.

Outsider to the Sample Group: The researcher does not meet participant criteria, maintaining analytical distance and reducing bias.

**9. Potential Challenges & Mitigation Strategies**

**Participant Recruitment Bias:** Snowball sampling may lead to a homogenous sample. To counteract this, recruitment will emphasise diversity in design disciplines and backgrounds.

**Subjectivity in Analysis:** Using \*\*team coding, AI coding comparison, and member checking to enhance reliability and minimise researcher bias.

**Industry Sensitivity:** Addressing plagiarism in design may be a sensitive topic. To encourage candid responses, interviews will emphasise confidentiality and ethical handling of data.