

Internet Freedom Research Curriculum



Centre for Intellectual
Property and Information
Technology Law

Greater
Internet
Freedom



Strathmore University

Centre for Intellectual Property and
Information Technology Law



Internews

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About CIPIT

The Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law (CIPIT) is an evidence-based research and training Centre based at Strathmore University, Nairobi, Kenya. CIPIT was established in 2012 and focuses on studying, creating, and sharing knowledge on the development of intellectual property and information technology utilizing diverse methodological approaches to inform debates on ICT applications and regulation.

About GIF

The Greater Internet Freedom Project (GIF) is a three-year, consortium-based, global program operating across 40 countries, managed by Internews. The GIF consortium is fighting to preserve an open, secure, accessible, reliable, and interoperable internet - and by extension, protect the human rights enabled by access to the Internet. Through this research curriculum, the GIF Project seeks to establish the standard research protocol to be used by GIF research partners.

Curriculum for Research Strategies and Methodology

This Research Strategies and Methodology curriculum has been prepared by the Centre for Intellectual Property and Information Technology Law (CIPIT), Strathmore University, with support from Internews. The curriculum is intended to support partners in the Greater Internet Freedom (GIF) project with their research activities. **Generally, this curriculum outlines best practices based on current accepted academic norms, for developing and executing research projects.**

Curriculum Topics

1. Defining research questions.
2. Incorporating literature review in a research paper.
3. Selecting and developing research project methodology.
4. Designing projects to influence policy and advocacy analysis.
5. Crafting a research paper with citations and references.

1. Defining Research Questions

Section Introduction

This section provides a working definition of ‘research’, a ‘research problem’, and a ‘research question.’ Specifically, it provides Greater Internet Freedom (GIF) partners with a deep dive into research questions, including the types of research questions, and the steps to developing a good research question.

Learning Objectives

1. To understand what a research question is.
2. To learn the types of research questions and steps to developing a good research question.
3. To differentiate between good and bad research questions.
4. To identify key points to keep in mind when creating a research question.
5. To understand the importance of a clearly defined research question before undertaking a research project.

1.1. What is a Research Question?

It is critical to examine what research is before delving into the steps required to craft a well-defined research question. Research may be defined as an activity that involves finding out things you did not know. On the other hand, an academic definition of research is an activity that involves finding out about things no one else knew about either, or the “use of existing knowledge and information in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings.”¹ This is done for the purpose of advancing the frontiers of knowledge.² According to Clifford Woody, **research is the process of defining and redefining problems, formulating hypotheses or suggested solutions, gathering, organizing, and analyzing data, drawing deductions, and coming to conclusions.** Finally, the conclusions are carefully tested to see if they agree with the hypotheses that were originally proposed.³

1.2. Types of Research

There are various types of research, and these include:⁴

- a. **Basic vs Applied Research:** The purpose of basic research is developing ‘knowledge, theories and predictions.’ Applied research aims at developing ‘techniques, products and procedures.’
- b. **Exploratory vs Explanatory Research:** The purpose of exploratory research is to explore the ‘main aspects of an under-researched problem.’ Explanatory research explains the ‘causes and consequences of a well-defined problem.’
- c. **Inductive vs Deductive Research:** The purpose of inductive research is to ‘develop a theory’ while the purpose of deductive research is to ‘test a theory.’

1.3. From Research Problem to Research Question

The first step in undertaking research is identifying the research problem. According to Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, a research problem is “an intellectual stimulus calling for a response in the form of scientific inquiry”.⁵ Frankfort added that the researcher will typically identify or choose a set of concepts to describe the problem. In turn, the variables assessed in the study are the problem concepts.

Usually, there are two main parts to the research problem. It is critical to distinguish between the two. The first is a description of the issue as the researcher sees it, and the second is a list of the research questions the study will attempt to answer.⁶

A research question needs to be stated clearly, succinctly, be narrowly focused, and unambiguously for it to be the focus of a research project. The answer to this question, which refers to a problem or issue, is given in the study’s conclusion based on the evaluation and analysis of the data. In many studies, the factors and issues the study is meant to address are listed in the research question.

¹ Western Sydney University, Definition of Research.

² Research Methods: The Basics, Nicholas Walliman, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2011.

³ Methodology, Shanti Bhushan Mishra, Shashi Alok, Educreation Publishing, 2019.

⁴ Scribbr, What is a Research Design |Types, Guide & Examples.

⁵ Frankfort-Nachmias, Chava, and David Nachmias. Study guide for research methods in the social sciences. Macmillan, 2007.

⁶ Research Methods for Political Science, Second Edition, Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches, David E. McNabb, 2010 Taylor & Francis.

For a literature review, previous studies are frequently used to support the crafting of a research question. The literature review process may be defined as examining the reported findings of other researchers. It enables one to know where the research gaps are and to refine their research question. As a result, these questions are frequently open-ended, allowing researchers to change them as they review relevant literature and develop the study's framework. Although many research initiatives concentrate on just one research question, larger studies frequently include more than one research topic.⁷

Research questions are used to define a research problem on a granular level. Specificity allows for actionable steps to be developed to meet the study objective. For example, a research study may want to understand the impacts of climate change on smallholder farmers. A good research question would narrow this goal to an issue that can be studied. A research question from this may be, "What is the effect of decreasing rainfall on potato crop yields in Northern Kenya?" The different things you can do to split up the main question are:

- a. Separate it into elements that can be researched separately, e.g. governmental, commercial, cultural, and technical.
- b. Investigate various viewpoints, whether individual or collective, e.g. both employers and employees.
- c. Look into the various terms being used, e.g. health, wealth, self-assurance, and sustainability.
- d. Think about the issue from various perspectives, e.g. the person, the team, or the business.
- e. Compare the results of the various aspects of the methods of segmentation mentioned above.⁸

Non-Ideal Example Research Question

What are legal frameworks and technical internet protocols that infringe on internet freedom in Kenya?

Ideal Example Research Question & Sub-Question

Question: What legal frameworks in Kenya affect internet freedom?

Sub-Question: Which technical internet protocols affect internet freedom in Kenya?

1.4. Types of Research Questions

Research questions can be classified into different categories depending on the aspect to be evaluated. These include:

a. Quantitative Research Questions

These questions are specific and often contain the population to be examined, dependent and independent variables, and the research strategy to be employed. Typically, they are created and finalized at the beginning of the research.

Quantitative research questions also connect the research question and the research design. Furthermore, there is no "yes" or "no" answer to these questions. As a result, terms like "is," "are," "do," or "does" are not used in quantitative research inquiries. Typically, quantitative research questions aim to comprehend specific social, family, or educational events or processes that take place in a particular context.

⁷ Research.com, How to Write a Research Question: Types, Steps, and Examples.

⁸ Research Methods: The Basics, Nicholas Walliman, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2011. pg 32-33.

They can also be divided into three categories: descriptive, comparative, and relationship.

- 1. Descriptive Research Questions:** seek to either define variables that the study will measure or assess responses of the study's population to one or more factors. Usually, these questions start with "what."
- 2. Comparative Research Questions:** seek to identify differences for an outcome variable between two or more groups. These queries may also be causative. For instance, the researcher may contrast two groups: one in which a certain variable is present, and the other in which it is not.
- 3. Relationship Research Topics:** aim to identify patterns and interactions between two or more variables and to investigate and characterize them. These questions frequently employ the terms "association" or "trends," as well as dependent and independent variables.⁹

Descriptive Research Question

Example: What have governments done to make the Internet available, accessible and affordable for all segments of the population?

Comparative Research Question

Example: What regulations have been put in place to strike a balance between freedom of access to the internet and protection of free speech?

Relationship Research Question

Example: What is the legal position of internet platforms under online media law and the freedom of media on the internet?

b. Qualitative Research Questions

Qualitative research questions may concern broad areas or more specific areas of a research study. Qualitative research questions are connected to study design, just like quantitative research questions are. However, qualitative research questions are often adaptive, non-directional, and more flexible than their quantitative equivalents. Research employing these inquiries often has one of three objectives: "find", "explain", or "explore."

The following are types of qualitative research questions:¹⁰

- 1. Contextual Research Questions:** They aim to define the characteristics of what currently exists.
- 2. Descriptive Research Questions:** They attempt to describe a phenomenon.
- 3. Emancipatory Research Questions:** They seek to generate knowledge that enables social action, particularly for the benefit of underprivileged individuals.

⁹ Ibid (n. 7).

¹⁰ Ibid (n. 7).

4. **Evaluative Research Questions:** They assess the effectiveness of existing methods or paradigms.
5. **Explanatory Research Questions:** They look for explanations for phenomena as well as connections between existing things.
6. **Exploratory Research Questions:** They delve into obscure facets of a certain subject.
7. **Generative Research Questions:** They aim to provide new ideas for the development of theories and actions.
8. **Ideological Research Questions:** They are used in research that aims to advance specific ideologies of a position.

1.5. Steps to Developing a Good Research Question

1. Pick an interesting broad topic:

Most researchers concentrate on subjects that pique their true curiosity. For researchers working on internet freedom, their organizational mission or ongoing internet policy initiatives are a good starting point.

2. Conduct some preliminary research on the broad topic:

To learn what has previously been done and to help you focus, a brief literature review will help as it will inform you on what topics academics and researchers are debating in relation to your subject.

3. Think about your audience:

Keep your audience in mind when you select your topic and formulate your question. Ask yourself if your target audience would be interested in the question you're constructing.

4. Start posing questions:

Start posing open-ended "how" and "why" questions to yourself about your main subject after considering points 1 to 3 above.

5. Analyze your question:

Once you've posed a question, or perhaps a few questions, consider if they would make good research questions or whether you should abandon them.¹¹

1.5.1. Examples of Good and Bad Research Questions

Example: Bad Research Question

Question: How should social networking sites address the harm they cause?

Example: Good Research Question

Question: What action should social networking sites like TikTok and Facebook take to protect users from misinformation?

The ambiguous formulation of the bad question makes no mention of the specific social networking sites in issue or the potential harm they could be creating. Additionally, it presupposes that this "damage" has been established and/or acknowledged. The good research question details the websites (TikTok and Facebook), the probable harm (misinformation), and the potential victims of that harm (users). **A good research topic should never be open to speculation or ambiguity.**

¹¹ Ibid (n.7).

Example: Unfocused Research Question

Question: What is the effect on human rights from privacy breaches?

Example: Focused Research Question

Question: What is the most significant effect of privacy breaches on the lives of women in Uganda?

The unfocused research question is so wide that it could not even be effectively addressed in a typical research paper. The narrowed version concentrates on a particular consequence of privacy violations, a particular setting (Uganda), and the particular group that is impacted (women). The writer must also provide an opinion on which effect has the biggest influence on the persons who are impacted.

When in doubt, try to be as specific and detailed as you can with your research question.

1.6. Important Points to Keep in Mind in Creating a Research Question

A good research topic should be feasible, interesting, novel, ethical, and relevant when considered in the context of the desired study design (which forms the mnemonic 'FINER').

1.6.1. FINER Criteria for a Good Research Question

1. Feasible:

- a. Adequate number of subjects (subjects in this context refer to groups of interests or participants needed to conduct the study).
- b. Adequate technical expertise, i.e., in possession of or access to enough practical and theoretical knowledge to carry out the required study.
- c. Affordable in time and money.
- d. Manageable in scope.

2. Interesting:

- a. Getting the answer intrigues the investigator and her friends.

3. Novel:

- a. Confirms, refutes or extends previous findings.
- b. Provides new findings.

4. Ethical:

- a. Amenable to a study that institutional review board will approve.

5. Relevant:

- a. To existing knowledge.
- b. To technology policy.
- c. To future research.¹²

¹² McGill University, Identifying the Research Question.

2. Incorporating Literature Review in a Research Paper

Section Introduction

This section looks into the importance of incorporating literature review in a research paper. It elaborates on the definition and purpose of a literature review, the structure variations of literature reviews and when to use it, how to conduct a literature review and finally, the mistakes made in the literature review process.

Learning Objectives

1. To understand what a literature review is.
2. To learn the structure variations of literature reviews and properly differentiate them.
3. To get a good understanding of the purpose of literature reviews and when to use them in research.
4. To know how to conduct a literature review.
5. To understand the mistakes made in the literature review process.

2.1 What is a Literature Review?

A literature review is defined as a survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic being researched on.¹³ **This overview of information gathered in relation to the topic allows a researcher to pinpoint relevant theories, methods, and gaps in the existing research area that can later be applied to the research paper.**

The purpose of the literature review is to provide the reader with a comprehensive review of the literature related to the problem under investigation.

2.2 Structure Variations of Literature Reviews

A literature review is structured in three main parts, namely; the introduction or background, the body of the review or the discussion of literary sources found and the conclusion or recommendations.¹⁴ The body of a literature review can take a variety of forms or structural variations, which can be chronological, thematic, methodological or theoretical in their entirety or combine any of these structural variations.

2.2.1 Chronological

This approach involves tracing the development of the topic over time and breaking down the sources based on their publication date to keep a correct historical timeline. However, it should be noted that this structural variation involves much more than simply listing and summarizing sources in order. It involves analyzing patterns, turning points and key debates that have shaped the direction of the field, and giving an interpretation of how and why certain developments occurred.

2.2.2 Thematic

This approach focuses on recurring central themes that can inform how to organize a literature review into subsections that address different aspects of the topic.

Practical Guidance

Guide: If you are reviewing literature about inequalities in internet freedom, key themes might include:

- a. Universal, affordable and meaningful Internet access.*
- b. Cultural attitudes.*
- c. Social status.*
- d. Economic access.*

2.2.3 Methodological

This structural approach looks at the methods used to present the central concept. If literary sources are drawn from different disciplines or fields that use a variety of research methods, it would be best to compare the results and conclusions that emerge from different research methods.

¹³ Scribbr.com, How to Write a Literature Review | Guide, Examples, & Templates.

¹⁴ Daniel Pn, How to Write a Literature Review.

Practical Guidance

Guide 1: Look at what results have emerged in qualitative versus quantitative research in regard to internet freedom in different countries.

Guide 2: Another angle would be to discuss how internet freedom has been approached by empirical versus theoretical scholarship.

Guide 3: Divide the literature into sociological, historical, and cultural sources..

2.2.4 Theoretical

Oftentimes a literature review is the foundation for a theoretical framework and can be used to discuss various theories, models, and definitions of key concepts.¹⁵

2.3 How to Conduct a Literature Review

The literature review is part of secondary research and involves similar stages parallel to conducting primary research.¹⁶ **You should have the following key components in mind when conducting a literature review:**

- a. Rational**
- b. Research questions.**
- c. Hypothesis.**
- d. Data collection plan.**
- e. Presentation of the data.**

2.3.1 Problem Formulation

In this step, the research questions and hypothesis formulated will determine what is included or excluded in the literature review.¹⁷ The rationale and focus of the literature review will influence the questions asked.

2.3.2 Data Collection

Relevant databases and the Internet can serve as a starting point for collecting data in relation to the subject matter at hand.¹⁸ Once the searches are conducted, accurate records with the dates and key words must be well kept.

2.3.3 Data Evaluation

When evaluating the information in the various articles, a system should be devised on how the data will be extracted. The type of data extracted is determined by the purpose of the literature review.

¹⁵ Ibid (n. 14).

¹⁶ Hart, C. (1998). *Doing a Literature review: Releasing the social science research imagination*. London: Sage.

¹⁷ Randolph, Justus (2009). *A Guide to Writing the Dissertation Literature Review*. *Practical Assessment, Re-search & Evaluation*, 14(13).

¹⁸ Frantz Rowe (2014), *What Literature Review is Not: Diversity, Boundaries and Recommendations*, *European Journal of Information Systems*.

2.3.4 Analysis and Interpretation

With the data that has been extracted from various articles, a proper analysis and interpretation of the literature is then carried out. From the analysis, either a qualitative, quantitative or mixed-method approach is considered.

2.3.5 Public Presentation

The final step is to decide which information is pivotal to the research and which information will be left out.

2.4 Mistakes Commonly Made in Reviewing Research Literature

The following mistakes should be avoided while conducting literature review:

- a. Failure to relate the literature review findings with your own research.
- b. Lack of sufficient time to fully identify resource materials that are related to one's research topic.
- c. Accepting the literature review findings as valid without critical examination of all aspects of the research.
- d. Not considering contrary literature review findings.

3. Selecting and Developing Research Project Methodology

Section Introduction

This section discusses the different types of research methodology. It also discusses factors to consider when selecting the best research methodology and steps to follow when selecting the research methodology for your study.

Learning Objectives

1. To learn the different types of research methodology.
2. To understand qualitative research, quantitative research and mixed methods research.
3. To know factors to consider when selecting the best research methodology for your research study.
4. To identify the key steps to follow when selecting the research methodology for your research study.

3.1. What are the Different Types of Research Methodology?

Research methodology may be defined as a way to systematically solve a research problem. It is a procedure or technique that investigates the scientific process of research. In it, we examine the various procedures a researcher typically uses to investigate a research problem, as well as the reasoning behind them. The researcher must be knowledgeable about both methodology and research methods/techniques.

In addition to knowing how to create specific tests or indices, compute the mean, the mode, the median, the standard deviation, or chi-square, and apply specific research techniques, researchers also need to know which of these methods or techniques are pertinent and which are not, as well as what they would mean, indicate, and justify.¹⁹ The three main types of research methodology include:

3.1.1 Qualitative Research

This type of research is concerned with ‘developing explanations of social phenomena.’²⁰ It is also concerned with how people interpret and make sense of their experiences so as to understand their social reality.²¹ It can also be said that it is concerned with ‘qualitative phenomenon’²² that is, relating to quality or variety and therefore it is descriptive thus harder to analyze than quantitative data. **It is therefore based on the subjective assessment of ‘attributes, motives, opinions, desires, preferences and also behavior.’²³**

Qualitative methods are useful in the identification of intangible factors such as ‘social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity and also religion.’²⁴ This method can help researchers interpret and also understand better the complex reality of a situation, especially when used alongside quantitative data.

a. Qualitative Research Methods

The most common qualitative data collection methods are the following:

- 1. Participant Observation:** which is ideal for the collection of data on ‘naturally occurring behaviors in their usual contexts.’
- 2. In-depth Interviews:** which are appropriate for data collection on ‘individuals’ personal histories, perspectives and experiences, especially when sensitive topics are being explored.’
- 3. Focus Groups:** which are effective in obtaining data on the cultural norms of a group and also ‘generating broad overviews of issues of concern to the cultural groups or subgroups represented.’

¹⁹ Kothari C.R, Research Methodology: Methods & Techniques, New Age Publishers 2004.

²⁰ Beverley Hancock, Elizabeth Ockelford and Kate Windridge, An Introduction to Qualitative Research.

²¹ Haradhan Mohajan, ‘Qualitative Research Methods in Social Sciences and Related Subjects’ (2018) 7(1) Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People. pp. 23 - 48.

²² Dr. Shanti Bhushan Mishra and Dr. Shashi Alok, Handbook of Research Methodology.

²³ Umesh Kumar Dubey and D.P Kothari, Research Methodology: Techniques and Trends (CRC Press 2022).

²⁴ Natasha Mack and others, Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector’s Field Guide (Family Health International 2005).

The advantage of qualitative research methods is that they are more flexible since they allow ‘greater spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and study participant.’ For instance, the use of “open-ended” questions enable the participants to respond in their own words compared to the rigidity of responding using either “yes” or “no.” Also this research method is considered as creating a less formal relationship between the researcher and participant. This is because its flexibility enables participants to have detailed responses and a researcher can tailor subsequent questions according to the information provided by the participant.

3.1.2 Quantitative Research

This research method is described as the explanation of an issue through collecting data in numerical form and analyzing it with the help of mathematical methods, especially statistics.²⁵ **It therefore entails quantifying and analyzing results variables to get results. It entails the utilization of numerical data using ‘specific statistical techniques to answer questions like who, how much, what, where, when, how many and how.’**

In simple terms, this research method deals with numbers and anything that is measurable in ‘a systematic way of investigation of phenomena and their relationships.’²⁶ Compared to qualitative research which seeks to interpret and understand social interactions, the quantitative research method entails the ‘testing of hypothesis, looking at cause and effect as well as making a prediction.’²⁷ Thus, the main objective of quantitative research is to quantify variation and predict casual relationships.²⁸

Variables are crucial in quantitative research since they are the phenomenon that is ‘classified and quantified.’ A variable has been described as ‘a property or characteristic of things and people that vary in quality and quantity.’ In simple terms, it is something which changes, such as temperature.²⁹

a. Quantitative Research Methods

The most common quantitative data collection methods are:

- 1. Survey:** This entails ‘sampling questionnaire, questionnaire design, questionnaire administration’ to collect information from the population being studied and analyze it to understand their behavior. It is utilized where researchers require the participants to choose from specific responses.
- 2. Correlational:** This is used to determine whether and to what extent a relationship exists between two or more variables ‘within a population.’ Researchers utilize it to make comparison between two sets of numbers and also identify the relationship between two things.

²⁵ Oberiri Destiny Apuke, ‘Quantitative Research Methods: A Synopsis Approach’ (2017) 6 (10) Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review (Kuwait Chapter) 40 - 47.

²⁶ Mora Iskandar, Quantitative Research Methods.

²⁷ Apuke (n 25).

²⁸ Dubey, (n 23).

²⁹ Apuke (n 25).

3. **Experimental:** A researcher uses this method to investigate ‘the treatment of an intervention into the study group then measures the outcomes of the treatment.’ An example of this is a study on online teaching whereby a control group receives face-to-face instruction while the experimental group receives instructions virtually.
4. **Descriptive:** This mainly focuses on the ‘what’ of the subject matter and the purpose is to describe the current status of a phenomenon. It mainly describes circumstances, and the data collection is mostly through observation.

Quantitative research is favored because:

- Compared to qualitative research, it is more scientific and therefore a large amount of data can be collected and analyzed statistically.
- It is more structured since the researcher uses tools that aid in the collection of data such as questionnaires.
- It is more reliable since a researcher can collect data that is precise and consistent.
- It enables a research study to be replicated because of its high reliability.
- It collects data from larger samples and therefore the results represent the population.³⁰

3.1.3 Mixed Methods Research

This is a type of research whereby ‘a researcher(s) combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration.’ **In simple terms, it can be described as a procedure for ‘collecting, analyzing and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative research and methods in a single study to understand a research problem.’**

Some examples of mixed (data collection) methods include the utilization of:

1. **Performance tests and observation.**
2. **Interviews and questionnaires.**
3. **Questionnaires and follow up focus groups.**
4. **Document analysis, performance tests, questionnaire and interviews.**

Mixed methods research applies in the following circumstances:

- When the use of both qualitative and quantitative data provides a better understanding of the research problem.
- When one type of research that is qualitative or quantitative is not sufficient to address the research problem.

³⁰Formplus, 15 Reasons to Choose Quantitative over Qualitative Research.

- When the use of the method is more practical (elicits pragmatism).
- When it is essential to incorporate a qualitative component into a quantitative study.
- When there is need to build from one phase of the study to another. For instance, building on a quantitative study qualitatively to obtain detailed information.³¹

3.2. Factors to Consider When Selecting the Best Research Methodology for Your Study

3.2.1. Nature of the Research

Deciding on the research methodology depends on the nature of one's research questions, aims and objectives.³² The nature of research is informed by the kind of knowledge a researcher aims to gain. The nature of the research aims will therefore direct a researcher on the appropriate research methodology to employ and this can either be qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods.

3.2.2. Research Area Norms

This involves considering other approaches utilized by other researchers in the studies or discipline with 'similar aims and objectives.' In many cases, researchers from the same discipline adopt a common methodological approach. This does not necessarily mean that a researcher should follow the majority, but it is wise to consider the approaches others have used and evaluate their usefulness within one's context. The advantage of reviewing research methodologies used in similar studies by other researchers is one can use techniques that have already been developed by other researchers, for example data collection techniques. A practical example of this would be a quantitative study where a researcher can find 'tried and tested survey scales'. By utilizing already existing techniques, a researcher saves a lot of time and this also improves the quality of the work done since the methodologies and techniques used have been verified.

3.2.3. Practicalities

Although most research methodologies will produce good results, it is critical to take note of what is theoretically appropriate and what is practical considering the constraints that may arise. Some of the constraints that a researcher needs to consider are:

1. **Data Access:** A researcher needs to consider this practical constraint before proceeding to conduct the research. For example, if one decided to conduct primary research, s/he should think about the sample respondents that s/he has access to. The same also applies when using a quantitative approach through surveys to collect data. In this case, a researcher needs to factor in how many responses s/he will require to achieve 'statistically significant results.' In a nutshell, a researcher needs to take note of (a) the data they will require access to, (b) the amount of data needed, and (c) how the data will be collected. It is important to have the above in mind so that one does not end up spending a lot of time on research only to find out that s/he can't access the required data.

³¹ Abraham S. Fischler, *Mixed Methods*.

³² See: Derek Jansen, *How to Choose your Research Methodology*. Uttkarsha Bhosale, *How to Choose Best Research Methodology for Your Study*.

2. Time: It is crucial to consider the impact that data collection and the analysis components of the various methodologies have on timelines. These stages of the research may take longer than originally anticipated and therefore a researcher needs to factor in the practical implications of time allocated.

3. Money: It is important to consider the costs that may be incurred when deciding on the research methodology to be used. Although not all require money, some may require a well-planned out budget to cater for the costs that will arise. Some of the costs that may arise include rental costs for equipment and costs for software that will be used.

4. Equipment and Software: The software or hardware to be used is another practical constraint that a researcher needs to consider. This is however determined by the kind of data that one seeks to collect and analyze. For instance one may be required to use a specific software to analyze statistical data. Therefore, one needs to consider all this when formulating the methodology and whether they have access to them.

5. Knowledge and Skillset: Although the research process involves accruing knowledge and skills, a researcher needs to question their competence in conducting the research. For example, one should ask himself if s/he knows about the analysis methods to be used, whether they are conversant with the software to be used and whether they are excited to learn new research skills and acquire knowledge.

3.3. Steps to Follow When Selecting the Research Methodology for Your Study

A research methodology should be based on the researcher's 'convictions, beliefs and interests.'³³ Other factors that should be considered in choosing a research methodology include the 'aim of the research, epistemological concerns and norms of practice of the researcher and other previous work in the topic area.' Therefore, when choosing an appropriate research methodology to be used, the following steps enumerated below play a fundamental role in guiding a researcher:

- 1. Defining the Goals, Objectives and Research Question:** It is important for one to know what they want to research before deciding how to conduct the research. It is also crucial to determine the issues that should be studied to get answers to the research question. Sticking to the issues will lead one to the final result.
- 2. Referring to Pertinent Research and Effectively Used Methodology:** Determining a research methodology can be quite difficult and therefore in order to make it easier for a researcher, it is prudent to read pertinent literature by other researchers in the same field and then evaluate the methodology used based on its feasibility and limitations.
- 3. Structuring the Plan and Finding Resources to Conduct Research:** It is important to take into consideration the constraints that will have an impact on the overall research and also other necessities that will be crucial for the research to take place. For instance, some may be time-consuming, others may be obtained online while others may require a field study or even be expensive. It is therefore important for one to consider all aspects and their limitations towards data collection.
- 4. Writing the Research Methodology in Detail and Reviewing It:** Once a specific approach for conducting the research has been selected, one should take note of all the activities, and these must include the approximate time and resources that each step might take. The importance of this is that it helps in understanding the research approach that will be taken and also prepare one for any hurdles.

³³ Alex Opoku, Vian Ahmed and Julius Akotia, Choosing an Appropriate Research Methodology and Method.

4. Designing Research Projects to Influence Policy and Advocacy Analysis

Section Introduction

This section discusses how to develop and influence a research project focused on the analysis of policy and advocacy content. Specifically, it provides guidance on how to select a policy issue and how to understand the policy environment. It provides guidance on how to influence policy, how to map out the policy shapers to influence and how to gather evidence to support your advocacy. Policy communication methods and types are also covered in this chapter.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand how to select a policy issue and how to understand the policy environment.
2. Understand how to gather evidence-based data, and the best format to reach and influence a target audience.
3. Understand effective communication of policy and advocacy research.

4.1. How Research Ties into Policy and Advocacy Analysis

Advocacy research seeks to influence policies established by policymakers and others in power.³⁴ Therefore, it is important for researchers to collect good information and present it in a compelling manner.

4.2. Why Conduct Research to Influence Policy?

There are several reasons one may conduct research on policy matters:

1. **Demonstrating a Need:** To show that there's a need for intervention or funding (or both) on a particular issue. There are two ways a researcher may approach this goal.
 - a. They can research with a specific intent: Where they are already convinced that there is a need and the research is to gather the information to prove it to others.
 - b. They can research to find out exactly what the need is, so that they can advocate for something truly helpful. In this case, the researcher's primary concern is usually not a specific issue but improving the online experience for a target population or community.

2. **Addressing a Need:** To demonstrate the existence of a need or issue and to ensure it is actually addressed. The research can often be used to gain the backing of the public and/or policy makers to deal with a particular issue. They may be surprised to learn how many people it affects, for example research on the impact of lack of data protection laws.

3. **Identifying and Advocating for Appropriate Policy in a Given Situation:** Research can and should show you what has worked elsewhere and as a result, what might be a wise course of action in your circumstance. For example: What has worked in similar communities dealing with online violence against women?

4. **Providing a Strong Foundation for your Advocacy:** Having credible research to support your advocacy both builds your credibility and provides you with compelling justifications for your sponsorship decisions. It assists in addressing worries and objections that are motivated by emotion as well as refuting opposing arguments. Additionally, it ensures you are can competently address requests from an opponent or a member of the public asking for a justification or explainer of your position.

5. **Ensuring that what is Addressed is what Actually Needs to be Addressed:** This raises a concern in at least two different situations:
 - a. When there is no obvious solution to a problem. Research frequently sheds light on what a problem's true root cause is or how to approach a problem in order to make the desired changes.
 - b. When the problem that needs to be solved is complicated—either because of politics or because it will require significant time, money, and/or effort to solve.

³⁴ Community Tol Box, Section 10. Conducting Research to Influence Policy.

4.3. Types of Research Outputs for Target Stakeholders

Policy and advocacy research must be presented in a way that will both reach and influence the researcher's target audience. This means it has to be packaged in receptive and palatable formats. Examples of such formats include:

1. **Policy Briefs:** a succinct summary of a particular issue, the policy options to deal with it, and some recommendations on the best option.³⁵
2. **Research Reports:** a document that recounts how a study is conducted, outlines findings, and discusses those study findings relative to the study hypothesis or research questions.³⁶
3. **Opinion Articles:** an article that reflects the opinion of the author(s) on a particular topic.³⁷
4. **Infographics:** – a visual representation of data.³⁸
5. **Parliamentary Petitions:** a formal written request sent into Parliament by members of the public calling for some form of government action.³⁹

4.4. How to Design Research Projects that Influence Policy and Advocacy

4.4.1 Selecting a Policy Issue⁴⁰

1. **Relevance:** The issue should be relevant to the organization's mission and goals, as well as have a clear connection to the problem or challenge in the internet freedom space that it is attempting to address.
2. **Stakeholder Importance:** The issue should be important to the general public, and key stakeholders in the internet freedom space, and have a significant impact on the community or society.
3. **Realistic:** The issue should be one that can be realistically addressed through policy and advocacy efforts.
4. **Timely:** The issue should be timely, pertinent, and have the potential to be addressed in the near future.
5. **Support:** There should be a strong base of support for addressing the issue, including from key stakeholders and players in the internet freedom space as this encourages collaboration.
6. **Aligned:** Align with existing research and data on internet freedom: Identify the trends and ensure the policy issue should be consistent with existing research, data, and evidence that supports the need for change.

³⁵ See: Internews, Policy Brief. Amnesty International, Policy brief: Human rights defenders in the Pacific Region. ARTICLE 19, Side-stepping rights: Regulating speech by contract.

³⁶ See: Access Now, Shattered Dreams and Lost Opportunities: A year in the fight to #KeepItOn. See: Freedom House, Freedom on the Net 2022 - Countering an Authoritarian Overhaul of the Internet.

³⁷ See: Alberto Silva, Internet Freedom is Not Enough. See Tom Okman, Opinion: How data restrictions erode internet freedom. Ivar Hartmann, Protecting Online Speech in Latin America: Are Courts the Answer?

³⁸ Data4Change, #KeepItOn. Council of Europe, Infographic: Different forms of online harassment towards female journalists.

³⁹ AVAAZ, ACTA: The new threat to the net. See: ARTICLE 19 Eastern Africa, Access Now, Bloggers Association of Kenya, Defenders Coalition, The Kenya ICT Action Network, The Kenya Union of Journalists, Memorandum on the Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

⁴⁰ Datta, A, Three Ways to Select Policy Issues to Work on. On Think Tanks.

4.4.2. Understanding the Policy Environment

1. Policy Analysis Structure:

- a. Identify and define the problem or issue in the internet freedom space that the policy is intended to address.⁴¹
- b. Conduct a policy alternatives analysis (i.e., analysis used to identify and evaluate various policy options or alternatives that could be used to address a problem) to identify and evaluate various policy options or alternatives that could be used to address a problem. Alternatively, conduct a policy impact analysis (i.e., analysis used to determine the potential effects of each alternative on various stakeholders and the overall policy environment) to determine the potential effects of each alternative on various stakeholders and the overall policy environment.
- c. Based on the analysis and evaluation, make recommendations for the best course of action.
- d. Design and carry out an elaborate implementation plan for the policy, and this includes determining what resources will be required and identifying potential barriers and challenges.⁴²
- e. Monitor and evaluate the policy's implementation and impact on a regular basis and make adjustments as needed.

2. Advocacy Analysis Structure:

- a. Clearly identify and define the policy or social change issue that will be the focus of advocacy efforts.
- b. Conduct a stakeholder analysis/mapping which will entail identifying and analyzing the key internet freedom stakeholders who are likely to be affected by the issue, as well as those who have the power to influence the policy or social change agenda. Additionally, conduct a power analysis, which entails identifying and analyzing different stakeholders' sources of power and influence, as well as assessing the relative strength of different stakeholders in relation to the issue.⁴³
- c. Create a clear and comprehensive advocacy strategy that takes into account the findings of the stakeholder and power analyses and outlines specific tactics for engaging different stakeholders and building support for the policy or social change agenda.
- d. Put the advocacy strategy into action, including developing and executing specific tactics and tracking progress.
- e. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of advocacy efforts on a regular basis, making adjustments as needed.
- f. Communicate the results and findings of the advocacy analysis and efforts to the public, stakeholders, and decision-makers.

3. Decide How you Want to Influence Policy:

- a. Determine what policy should be: Consider the issue or problem being addressed, the policy's goals and objectives, and the political, economic, social, legal, and technical environment in which the policy will be implemented.
- b. Conduct a thorough analysis of the problem or issue under consideration, including data collection and research, as well as consultation with experts and stakeholders.⁴⁴ This could include validation meetings with key stakeholders or even interviews to gain a better understanding of the problem and its causes. Consider the perspectives of various stakeholders and the potential impact of the policy on various groups in society, e.g., marginalized/disadvantaged groups.

⁴¹ Association for Progressive Communications, Steve Buckley, Advocacy strategies and approaches: Overview.

⁴² Organizing for Effective Advocacy, Developing a Plan for Advocacy.

⁴³ Power Tools, Stakeholder Power Analysis.

⁴⁴ Organizing for Effective Advocacy. Conducting Research to Influence Policy.

- c. Identify potential policy solutions or alternatives. This can include analyzing various policy options, assessing their potential consequences, and weighing their feasibility, costs, and benefits.
- d. Based on the analysis and evaluation, make recommendations for the best course of action. Identifying trade-offs and compromises, as well as balancing competing priorities, can be part of this process.

4. Determine if the Current Policy is Working:

- a. Set clear and measurable goals for the policy to determine whether the policy is meeting its intended objectives. To assess the policy's effectiveness, gather data and information on its implementation, such as surveys, interviews, and monitoring reports.
- b. Data analysis entails examining the collected data for patterns and trends, as well as comparing the results to the established goals and objectives. Determine the strengths and weaknesses of the policy's strengths and weaknesses, as well as the factors that have contributed to its success or failure.
- c. Assessing the policy's impact on various stakeholders, including marginalized or disadvantaged groups, as well as the overall policy environment.
- d. Make recommendations for improving the policy or for alternative policies that may be more effective based on the evaluation.⁴⁵

5. Determine how to Push Policy in a Specific Direction:

- a. Conduct research and analysis to demonstrate the need for the policy and to build a strong case for the policy agenda.
- b. Lobby decision-makers, such as elected officials and government agencies, to support the policy agenda and educate them on the issue.
- c. Use media and public relations to raise awareness and build support for the policy agenda, as well as to counter any opposition to the policy.
- d. Create a grassroots movement of individuals and groups who support the policy agenda and can mobilize to advocate for the policy.
- e. Use the courts to advance the policy agenda by filing lawsuits or intervening in legal proceedings to challenge existing laws or regulations that are impediments to the policy.
- f. Build alliances with other organizations, groups, or individuals who can provide resources and support to advocate for the policy.

6. Support or Oppose Current Practices/Theory:

- a. Examine existing research and data to determine the efficacy and validity of a practice or theory.
- b. Consult with experts in the field to gain their perspective on the practice or theory, as well as its strengths and weaknesses.

7. Consider who you Need to Influence:

- a. Explain why a policy needs to be created or modified: Indicate the type and context of policies to be developed based on knowledge of the issue or problem and who it affects, such as public laws, regulatory policies, executive orders, business policies, or bylaws.⁴⁶
- b. Conduct stakeholder mapping: This requires mapping out stakeholders who are critical for your policy engagement. Examples include elected officials, government agencies, interest groups, media, members of the general public, international actors, amongst others.

⁴⁵ Frameworks Institute, Framing and Policy Making | How does framing help advance our public policy goals?

4.4.3 Gather Evidence-Based Data:

1. **Define the Problem:** Define the research question or problem that will be addressed by the research. Choose an appropriate research design, such as a survey, experiment, or case study, that will allow for the collection of valid and reliable data.
2. **Prioritise High Quality Data:** Use data collection methods such as surveys, interviews, observations, or experiments to ensure the data is of high quality and any sampling bias is minimised.
3. **Analyse and Priorise Core Findings:** Analyze data using appropriate statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, or machine learning. Interpret the findings of data analysis and draw conclusions and recommendations based on them. Make the research findings clear and accessible to key stakeholders such as policymakers, practitioners, and the general public.

4.4.4. Present Data in the Best Format to Reach and Influence your Target Audience:

1. **Choose Communication that is Accessible:** Prioritise making the information available in a variety of formats (e.g., text, audio, and video). Further, use plain language and, if possible ensure that the information is accessible on mobile devices.
2. **Choose Communication that is Noticeable:** Make communication stand out and grab attention by using design elements such as bold colors, striking imagery, and clean layouts. Create a strong headline that is clear, attention-grabbing, and summarizes your main message. If possible, use engaging and noticeable graphic material.
3. **Choose Communication that allows Interaction:** Encourage feedback and participation by giving the audience opportunities to ask questions, share their opinions, or provide feedback on the communication. For example, host live events, such as webinars or Q&A sessions, to allow the audience to interact in real time with experts or other stakeholders. Allow the audience to share their own experiences and perspectives by encouraging user-generated content (e.g., testimonials/reviews).

4.4.5 The Effective Use of Evidence:

1. Advocacy and Policy Analysis Relies Heavily on the Effective Use of Evidence:

Evidence-based information can aid in decision-making and the development of a compelling case for a particular policy or social change agenda. Some effective evidence-use strategies include:

- a. Use credible and trustworthy evidence from sources such as peer-reviewed research studies, government reports, or data from reputable organizations.
- b. Keep the evidence up to date by using the most recent data available and being aware of any changes in policy or social context that may impact the evidence's relevance.
- c. Use evidence from multiple sources, such as data from different countries or studies, to increase the evidence's reliability and generalizability.
- d. Be aware of the audience and tailor the evidence to their level of expertise, interests, and needs to make the information more accessible and meaningful to them.
- e. Evidence should be communicated clearly, using simple language, visual aids, and examples to help the audience understand and engage with the information.

5. Crafting a Research Paper with Citations and References

Section Introduction

This section defines what a research paper is, outlines the writing process, and delves into the structure of a research paper. It also explains how to cite properly.

Learning Objectives

1. To understand what a research paper and its structure is.
2. To understand the writing process.
3. To understand the importance of citation and reference styles.
4. To understand how to cite and reference.

5.1. What is a Research Paper?

A research paper constitutes formal writing, characterized by the writer's ability to make a case and persuade the reader of an idea or solution to a problem through evidence and not opinion. It presents informed arguments based on already-known facts by outlining questions that will address arguments of the main idea. These questions are then addressed through research, data collection, and analysis, which is then collectively synthesized to address the questions through critical thinking.⁴⁶

5.2. Characteristics of a Research Paper

A research paper should be simple, concise, objective, and logical. These characteristics also feed into one's style/type of writing depending on what the objective of the paper is as well as the conventions in the respective field, which is internet freedom in this context. A well-written research paper should have the following characteristics:

- 1. Simple:** the paper should be easily digestible and readable by the target audience and academic scholars.
- 2. Concise:** the paper should clearly reflect the idea and subject matter of the topic.
- 3. Objective:** the paper should present evaluated issues that focus on informed research, critical thinking, and evidence as opposed to personal opinion.
- 4. Logical:** the paper should show a clear flow in the topics discussed that relate to the idea or subject matter. This is demonstrated by a clear flow in the writing of the paper from beginning to end.

5.3. Writing a Research Paper: Styles

There are four key types of writing that inform the direction of a research paper. These are descriptive writing, analytical writing, persuasive writing, and critical writing.⁴⁷

- 1. Descriptive Writing:** primarily focuses on communicating facts or information. The main purpose is to identify, report, summarize and define.
- 2. Analytical Writing:** analytical writing requires one to re-organize evidence, facts, and information into different categories. These categories may already exist in the area of discipline, i.e., internet freedom. However, in some instances, you may have to create the categories depending on the subject matter. Analytical writing will involve analyzing, comparing, relating, and examining.
- 3. Persuasive Writing:** is a combination of analytical writing as well as sharing your point of view based on evidence, facts, and information. The aim of this kind of writing is to discuss, argue, evaluate and/or take a position.
- 4. Critical Writing:** has elements of persuasive writing, it requires that while you share your point of view, you are required to share two or more views based on those of other researchers of authority in the subject matter. It is an explanation of the researchers' interpretation or argument and an evaluation of the merits of the argument. This kind of writing requires you to debate, disagree and or evaluate.

⁴⁶ City University of Seattle, Academic Writing Guide: A Step-by-Step Guide to Writing Academic Papers.

⁴⁷ University of Sydney, Types of Academic Writing.

5.4. The Writing Process

- 1. Outline:** Developing the outline of a paper gives you a descriptive map of the paper and highlights of what is included in the paper. It gives the outline from the introduction to the conclusion. Creating an outline enables the writer to stay on track and identify topics and subtopics that are relevant to the title and the subject matter in the discussion. It enables the writer to list and classify all points of discussion, develop a rough draft of the paper, craft a relevant introduction with sufficient background information and establish a coherent conclusion.⁴⁸
- 2. Drafting:** This is the first step in the actual writing of the paper. The drafting process enables you to put the outline of the paper in actual writing, and the ideas reflected in the outline enable you to write the first draft which enables the writers' ideas to take shape. Drafting is a part of the writing process and can be done multiple times until the paper reflects and aligns with the research questions and objective.⁴⁹
- 3. Editing and Proofreading:** The process of editing will require the draft to be redrafted and revised. A writer does this by re-reading the work, reevaluating the evidence reflected, and amending where necessary. The editing process also enables one to ensure the paper has a coherent flow from beginning to end. The editing process may be done by the writer with the help of other researchers for a different perspective or peer reviewers.⁵⁰ Proofreading is the final stage of the writing process where the writer and/or reviewers evaluate the paper on grammar, repeated words, spacing and formatting, omitted words, and typographical errors. Proofreading ensures there are no further mistakes and improves the quality of the paper. It is advisable to undertake proofreading after all revisions and editing. You should proofread only after you have finished all of your other revisions and editing.
- 4. Submission Process:** The submission process for a research paper consists of first identifying an appropriate publication platform, such as journals, magazines, and websites that will reach members and scholars in a similar field and the intended target audience. Once the writer has identified the relevant publishing outlet, it is important to carefully read the guidelines of the selected publishing channel. This helps the writer create a checklist of requirements as they make their paper publish-ready. It is also important for the writer to identify more than one publishing outlet in the event that one outlet does not pick up the manuscript.⁵¹

5.5. Structure of a Research Paper⁵²

Generally, a research paper will consist of the following sections:

- 1. Abstract:** this gives a short summary of the article, a brief description of the objective methodology, and a conclusion of the paper. It gives an insight into the main purpose of the paper.⁵³ Keywords (these are terms, words, or phrases that identify the content of the subject matter) are often identified in the abstract.
- 2. Introduction:** this briefly describes the focus of the entire paper highlighting the main points. It gives background information and issues that are relevant in giving direction and understanding to the subject matter the paper is discussing. Key terminologies are defined in this section.
- 3. Methodology Section:** the writer identifies the research methods that have been used in the writing of the paper. This could either be qualitative or quantitative research methods.

⁴⁸ USC Libraries, Organizing your Research Paper.

⁴⁹ Calvert Education, The Writing Process- Drafting and Editing.

⁵⁰ J. Caulfield, The Writing Process.

⁵¹ Linda V. Knight, Theresa A. Steinbach, Selecting an Appropriate Publication Outlet: A Comprehensive Model of Journal Selection Criteria for Researchers in a Broad Range of Academic Disciplines. *IJDS* (2008) 60, 79.

⁵² Dr. T. Siva Prathap, Dr. Mohd Akhter Ali, M. Kamraju, How to Write and Academic Research Paper. *JETRI* (2019) 448,493.

⁵³ Design Education Forum of SA, What is an Academic Paper.

4. Body of Paper: this highlights the evaluation and analysis of the research. All evidence is logically and analytically laid down with clear reasoning on relevant points. It brings out the ideas of the writer backed by evidence as well as any arising arguments. This part intends to persuade readers of the writer's arguments. The body of the paper consists of the research results.

5. Conclusion: this reminds the reader of the purpose of the paper. It highlights the importance of the subject matter while highlighting the main points and significance of the findings of the subject matter. This section gives the author an opportunity to state their position and ideas on the subject matter and possibly make future predictions if any.

Note: This is an illustrative guide, and the specific requirements will depend on several factors such as the style guide for the journal, type of research, and stage of the research.

5.6. Citation

1. Importance of Citing: citation is also known as referencing. This is a method of acknowledging scholars, authors, and/or fellow researchers' work that the writer used to validate their ideas and positions on a subject matter. It is important as it gives credit as well as enables the work of the author, scholar, or researcher to be located for easy access by other persons i.e., the readers. The main aim of citation is also to ensure original work and thoughts are not replicated and passed off as the writer's own whereas that is not the case. It also enables validation of the scope of research on the subject matter.⁵⁴

2. Citation Styles: Citation styles are often dictated by the guidelines of the publishing entity or research institute. Where the writer is in a position to choose a citation style, it is recommended the writer use a citation style commonly used in their field/ discipline. The variations noted above offer a good guide. In the internet freedom space, the most common citation styles are Chicago, Harvard, MLA, and OSCOLA. Most publications on internet law and policy rely on OSCOLA while the ones with a social science angle rely on Chicago, Harvard, or MLA. **Citation includes the name of the author, date of publication, name, and location of the publishing company, title of the journal or name of the book, title of the research or chapter's name, and Digital Object Identifier (DOI).** The order of these depends on the style.

Practical Guide: Links to Different Citation Styles

Different disciplines use different reference styles.⁵⁵

1. *Economics:* Harvard

2. *Engineering & IT:* IEEE

3. *Humanities:* Chicago notes and bibliography; Harvard; MLA

4. *Law:* Bluebook; OSCOLA⁵⁶

5. *Medicine:* AMA; NLM; Vancouver

6. *Political Science:* APSA

7. *Psychology:* APA

8. *Sciences:* ACS; Chicago author-date; CSE citation-name or citation-sequence; CSE name-year; Harvard

9. *Social Sciences:* AAA; APA; ASA; Chicago author-date.

⁵⁴ USC Libraries, Organizing your Research Paper.

⁵⁵ Jack Caulfield, Citation Styles Guide.

⁵⁶ Bluebook is the main style guide for legal citations in the US while OSCOLA is the main legal citation style for the UK.

5.6. Citation (*ctd*)

3. How to Cite: There are two variations to citations, i.e., in-text citation, and reference list entry.

These vary depending on the style of referencing selected. The difference between the two is one is short and highlighted within text while the other is more detailed and is highlighted separately in a list at the end of a research paper.

a. In-text citation: This is a short-abbreviated reference included in the text to help the reader identify the original source of the text. It includes the name of the author and the publication date, e.g., *‘The quality of available digital infrastructure is also a cause for concern (William, 2004).’*⁵⁷

b. References list entry: This is a list of complete citations of all the works used in the paper. This list appears at the end of the paper. It informs the reader of the complete source of information and includes all the details about the original source. The author’s name, the title of the work (article, journal, blog, book/ book chapter, newspaper), year of publication, depending on the work, volume number, page number, DOI number 16, and issue number. It may also include the website address if the source of access is online, e.g., *D. Louisell and M. Pirsig, “The Significance of Verbatim Recording of Proceedings in American Adjudication,” Minnesota Law Review, vol. 1100, 1953, or, Hoffmann, M. (2016) ‘How is information valued? Evidence from framed field experiments’, The Economic Journal, 126(595), pp. 1884–1911. doi:10.1111/eoj.12401.*

c. Hyperlinks: Hyperlink citation (or hypercitation) is attributing an original work by formatting hyperlinks directly into the text of an academic paper or writing. No page numbers, parentheses, dates, or footnotes are used. Other citation conventions do not adequately account for the extensive digitization of information over the past several decades, despite the fact that they have created new categories for electronic resources. Currently, secondary research is increasingly done by academics using internet-based platforms. **Numerous volumes of published academic writings are now completely digital, searchable, and downloadable online**, thanks to services like Google Scholar, JSTOR, Lexis-Nexis, and ProQuest. More information is provided on the citation page for a published work than is ever provided in a typical bibliographic entry.⁵⁸

NB: It is important to remember that the structure of in-text citation and reference lists vary depending on the citation style guidelines. However, in most cases, in-text citations are similar across most of the styles highlighted.

5.7 Criteria for Publication

The following factors must be met for a research manuscript to meet the criteria of publishable academic works. This criteria varies from publication to publication.

1. *The study presents the findings of original research.*
2. *The reported findings have not been published anywhere else.*
3. *Experiments, statistics, and other analyses are carried out to a high level of technical proficiency and are sufficiently described.*
4. *The information is used to present conclusions in an appropriate manner that is supported by it.*
5. *The article is written in a conventional language like English or French and is organized in a way that is understandable.*
6. *The study complies with all regulations governing the integrity of the study and the ethics of experimentation.*
7. *The article follows accepted standards for data accessibility and reporting practices.*
8. *The research is relevant.*⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Anuratha, Difference Between In-text Citation and Reference (PEDIAA, 2021)

⁵⁸ Citing with hyperlinks will change with hypercitation.

⁵⁹ PLOS ONE, Criteria for Publication.

5. 7 Criteria for Publication (*ctd*)

If your research does not meet the above criteria, you can still publish in non-academic publications. Most publications have style guides, and some require researchers to pitch their ideas before the editor can accept the manuscript. This may be done in form of a writer's pitch that is usually 100 words. Some of the research publication outlets that are receptive to articles from non-academic researchers writing on internet freedom include:

- a. GIS Watch.
- b. GenderIT.
- c. Rest of World.
- d. Small Media blog.
- e. Responsible Data blog.

Appendix I: Glossary

Citation - A reference to a source of information or quotation given in a text. This is usually in abbreviated form to enable the full details to be found in the list of references.

Concept - A general expression of a particular phenomenon, or words that represent an object or an idea. This can be concrete, e.g., dog, cat, house, or abstract – independent of time or place, e.g., anger, marginality, politics. We use concepts to communicate our experience of the world around us.

Data - The plural of datum, a particular measured value of a variable.

Experience - Actual observation or practical acquaintance with facts or events that results in knowledge and understanding.

Explanation - One of the common objectives of research.

Hypothesis - A theoretical statement that has not yet been tested against data collected in a concrete situation, but which is possible to test by providing clear evidence for support or rejection.

Method - The processes by which a research question is answered.

Participant - Someone who takes part in a research project as a subject of study. This term implies that the person takes an active role in the research by performing actions or providing information.

Primary Data - Sources from which researchers can gain data by direct, detached observation or measurement of phenomena in the real world, undisturbed by any intermediary interpreter. It is a matter of philosophical debate as to what extent the detachment and undisturbed state are possible or even desirable.

Research Problem - A general statement of an issue meriting research. It is usually used to help formulate a research project and is the basis on which specific research questions, hypotheses or statements are based.

Research Question - A theoretical question that indicates a clear direction and scope for a research project.

Sample - The small part of a whole (population) selected to show what the whole is like. There are two main types of sampling procedure, random and non-random.

Value - An actual measurement of a variable.

Variable - A measurable attribute of an indicator or a case.

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