

Chapter 16

Creative Exploration: Unveiling the Depths of Arts–Based Research in Qualitative Methodology

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores arts-based research within qualitative methodology, focusing on its intersectionality of creativity, expression, and inquiry. It provides an overview of arts-based research, its historical origins, foundational principles, and diverse methodological approaches. The chapter emphasizes the theoretical foundations of arts-based inquiry, which engages with individuals and communities through various artistic modalities. It highlights the role of creativity in arts-based research, highlighting its innovative modes of knowledge acquisition and sense-making. The chapter also discusses the potential of arts-based research to amplify marginalized voices and perspectives, while addressing ethical considerations such as power dynamics, representation, and interpretation. The chapter concludes by reflecting on the implications of arts-based research for qualitative methodology and advocating for its continued integration and expansion.

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INTRODUCTION

Exploring creativity and expression through arts-based research offers a unique opportunity to delve into the qualitative aspects of human experience. By using various art forms such as painting, music, dance, and theatre, researchers can gain insights into emotions, perspectives, and cultural dynamics that may be difficult to capture through traditional quantitative methods. One of the most notable strengths of arts-based research is its ability to engage participants deeply personally and expressively. Through creating and interpreting art, individuals can share their stories and experiences in ways that transcend language and logic. This aspect is particularly invaluable when investigating complex and sensitive topics such as identity, trauma, and social change. Traditional data collection methods may falter in capturing the full depth and nuance of human experience, whereas arts-based research allows for a more holistic and nuanced exploration. Furthermore, arts-based research encourages a collaborative approach to inquiry, where participants are active co-creators in the research process. This collaborative dynamic empowers participants and enriches the research outcomes by incorporating diverse perspectives and voices.

By honouring the lived experiences of all involved, arts-based research produces findings that are more reflective of the complexities inherent in human life. In the field of arts-based research, there is a growing recognition of the need for rigorous methodologies and ethical considerations. Researchers are increasingly exploring ways to ensure the validity and reliability of findings derived from artistic expressions while prioritizing participants' well-being and consent. As arts-based research continues to gain attraction, it offers an exciting and dynamic avenue for qualitative inquiry, challenging researchers to think beyond traditional boundaries and embrace the vibrant and complex nature of human creativity and expression.

The use of arts-based research as a qualitative research method has garnered increasing interest due to its ability to offer a deeper understanding of human experiences, emotions, and cultural dynamics. Through engagement with various art forms such as painting, music, dance, and theatre, arts-based research provides a unique platform for exploring creativity and expression in a deeply personal and collaborative manner. Arts-based research not only allows participants to express their stories and experiences in ways that go beyond traditional data collection methods, but also encourages a collaborative approach where participants play an active role in the research process.

The recognition of rigorous methodologies and ethical considerations in this field further emphasizes the need to ensure the validity and reliability of findings while prioritizing the well-being and consent of participants. As arts-based research continues to evolve, it presents an exciting and dynamic avenue for qualitative inquiry. By embracing the vibrant and complex nature of human creativity and expression,

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