



LJMU Research Online

Stevens, M

Adoption of participatory action research to develop an innovative research method teaching resource: Research Methods Roadmap game

<http://researchonline.ljmu.ac.uk/id/eprint/18957/>

Article

Citation (please note it is advisable to refer to the publisher's version if you intend to cite from this work)

Stevens, M (2023) Adoption of participatory action research to develop an innovative research method teaching resource: Research Methods Roadmap game. Sage Research Methods Cases Part 1.

LJMU has developed [LJMU Research Online](#) for users to access the research output of the University more effectively. Copyright © and Moral Rights for the papers on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. Users may download and/or print one copy of any article(s) in LJMU Research Online to facilitate their private study or for non-commercial research. You may not engage in further distribution of the material or use it for any profit-making activities or any commercial gain.

The version presented here may differ from the published version or from the version of the record. Please see the repository URL above for details on accessing the published version and note that access may require a subscription.

For more information please contact researchonline@ljmu.ac.uk

<http://researchonline.ljmu.ac.uk/>

SAGE Research Methods Cases Part 1

Adoption of Participatory Action Research to Develop an Innovative Research Method Teaching Resource: Research Methods Roadmap Game

Author: Madeleine Stevens

Pub. Date: 2023

Product: SAGE Research Methods Cases Part 1

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781529630404>

Methods: Teaching research methods, Participatory action research, Innovative methods

Keywords: games, adoption, gaming, students, feedback, lecturers, social learning, change management, roads, maps

Disciplines: Business and Management

Access Date: February 27, 2023

Publishing Company: SAGE Publications Ltd

City: London

Online ISBN: 9781529630404

© 2023 SAGE Publications Ltd All Rights Reserved.

Abstract

Through the process of participatory action research (PAR), this case study discusses the development of a new teaching resource in research methods: the Research Methods Roadmap © (RMR) game. The case study shares valuable insight into the opportunities and challenges associated with using PAR and how active participation and feedback impact reflection and reflexivity to drive consumer use and an enhanced product. I collected qualitative and quantitative data through multiple phases of data collection from a broad range of active participants over a period of nine months. Research methods are notoriously difficult to teach and understand, and thus, I sought to provide a solution to address these difficulties for research methods lecturers and students. As a result, I designed the RMR game to aid the teaching of research methodology aimed at undergraduate, intermediate, and advanced postgraduate students. I applied the PAR methodology to four phases of data collection. As I received continuous feedback, interpreted it, and took action based on the feedback, the game developed into further iterations which resulted in five iterations underpinned by PAR methodology. Some of the key lessons I learned were to allow sufficient time for trial and error and to involve a broader range of participants earlier on.



Learning Outcomes

By the end of this case study, students should be able to:

- Apply PAR in the development of a framework/model/product/service.
- Describe the benefits of using PAR methodology in driving continuous improvement of a framework/model/product/service.
- Evaluate the opportunities of eliciting and using feedback and participant reflection to improve iterations of a framework/model/product/service.
- Explain the challenges of using PAR methodology.
- Compare the impact of reflection and reflexivity.

Project Overview and Context

Having previously utilized action research for projects that require impactful change, I was relatively rehearsed in the principles of participatory and action research. For this particular project to be successful, it was clear from the outset that the research journey and outcomes had to be driven by an inclusive approach involving all the participants who were affected by the research. PAR is distinct from other forms of participative research, including action research and participative research, as the participants are not just involved. They are central to the participatory inquiry.

The project aimed to help instructors teach students who are learning the philosophy and concepts of research methods and methodology. Fail rates for research methods are typically much higher than for other subjects along with average marks for students' research proposals. Research methods and philosophy are some of the most challenging topics for most students undertaking the process of writing a dissertation or thesis. From a lecturer's perspective, my aim was to support and encourage learning through a fun, creative method to allow for an inclusive approach, incorporating the VARK model that proposes the four main learning styles as visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic ([Fleming, 2001](#)). This different approach to teaching is aimed to be inclusive for students with learning difficulties and neurodiversity. Research has unmistakably indicated that students adopt unique learning and studying approaches which have been posited as a prominent pedagogical issue ([Hawk & Shah, 2007](#)). These roadmaps were thus designed to recognize that students learn best when teaching methods and learning activities match their learning styles, strengths, and preferences and when there is coherence between the teaching strategies, assessment, and intended learning outcomes ([McMahon & Thakore, 2006](#)). The game thus promotes student individuality and allows students to demonstrate their understanding of the topic area.

PAR utilizes various iterations of the design of a framework/model/product/service through the seven key stages of social learning proposed by [Mackenzie et al., 2012](#) adaptive cycle of participatory research, which I have adapted to the research topic as follows:

Stage 1: Identifying issues or needs. The challenges identified with the teaching and learning of research methods were multiple. Data that was gathered through qualitative and quantitative student feedback over the previous three years indicated that students found the concepts of research methods difficult to grasp and the content overwhelming. In addition, the subject matter was perceived as "dry" (senior lecturer) and "foreign" (master's student), while lecturers found the subject matter difficult to teach.

Stage 2: Prioritizing issues and needs. The first priorities identified were to get our student satisfaction rates up and improve our students' pass rates and average scores.

Stage 3: Research partnerships. Initial research partnerships were formed with the students and the senior lecturer with a transparent understanding of the power relationship and how we intended to reflect and learn collaboratively.

Stage 4: Conducting research. PAR differs from action research and participative research in the sense that PAR focuses specifically on those affected (students and lecturers) by the project and their influence on each of the following components of the decision-making process: problem definition, method choice, data analysis, and use of findings. During the first iteration of the game, I obtained data from various sources including module surveys, and I received qualitative and quantitative feedback specific to the human resources Master's student cohort.

Feedback was also sourced through our board of studies, where student representatives provided verbal insight into their challenges. I used thematic data analysis to identify key themes for areas of improvement.

Subsequent iterations of the game reintroduced the importance of research partnerships where I sought insight for a larger sample, including undergraduate and doctoral students. I also collected data from external sources at an international level through three conferences and workshops.

Stage 5: Presenting findings. The improvement in content and pedagogical approaches led to a steady increase in student satisfaction as can be seen in [Figure 1](#); however, there was still room for improvement, especially with regard to average marks and pass rates.

Figure 1. Improvement in master's students' satisfaction score.



Source: Author.

Stage 6: Review process. The review process identified the various changes that had been implemented over the previous three years, which led to the critical identification of what else could be done to address the “dry, foreign, and overwhelming” themes.

Stage 7: Recommending implementation. After a further meeting with the program leader, he provided his approval for me to implement the first iteration of the RMR game.

Social Learning and Further Iterations

Social research methods typically include research paradigms of action, participative, and PAR which each have their own unique factors of participatory inquiry ([Bell et al., 2004](#)). Essentially, a key differentiator in PAR is that both parties (researcher and participants) achieve learning as a unit ([Bell et al., 2004](#)). In this case, the active participation of both students and me as a lecturer (and facilitator) was a key determinant in the success of the pilot study after the recommended version of the RMR game was implemented. Active participation was encouraged by me as researcher and lecturer through using the game over the course of 12 weeks of teaching the research methods module. Students used the game board through active participation, which led to facilitated discussions. I invited participation but never forced participants to be actively engaged. Even if students did not volunteer to use the gameboard, they still actively participated when fellow students took the lead. Later on in the project, nearly all the students participated in the game, as their confidence levels grew and they decided they could gain valuable insight by participating. PAR necessitates reflective practice from the researcher to continuously incorporate and apply new understandings as a process of learning and improvement, which can lead to more creative solutions ([Bell et al., 2004](#)). Therefore, PAR was an ideal methodology for this study. I was able to align the method with my personal values of using reflection and reflexivity, which allowed me to acknowledge how my role as a researcher affected the research process and outcomes ([Haynes, 2012](#)). This helped me become aware of and reflect deeply on how I received, interpreted, and acted on feedback I received from students and experts during the PAR process. Reflexivity in this context influenced my awareness as a researcher in relation to how the game evolved in the process of PAR ([Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2017](#)). As an embedded researcher, I had to continuously remind myself that the main purpose of the game was for the benefit of students, and I had to remain aware that my prior ex-

periences of teaching the content influenced my perceptions of how knowledge should be gained. Adopting reflexivity helped remind me of my role as researcher within the bigger context of the project, which was to take onboard feedback and drive the changes required.



Section Summary

- This section provides a practical overview of how to use PAR in driving continuous improvement through change.
- This section explains how to collect and utilize data within PAR.
- Reflection and reflexivity were important when I considered feedback to help me design new iterations of the game to make improvements.

Research Design

Data collection consisted of multiple phases as summarized in [Table 1](#) below.

Table 1. PAR data collection iterations

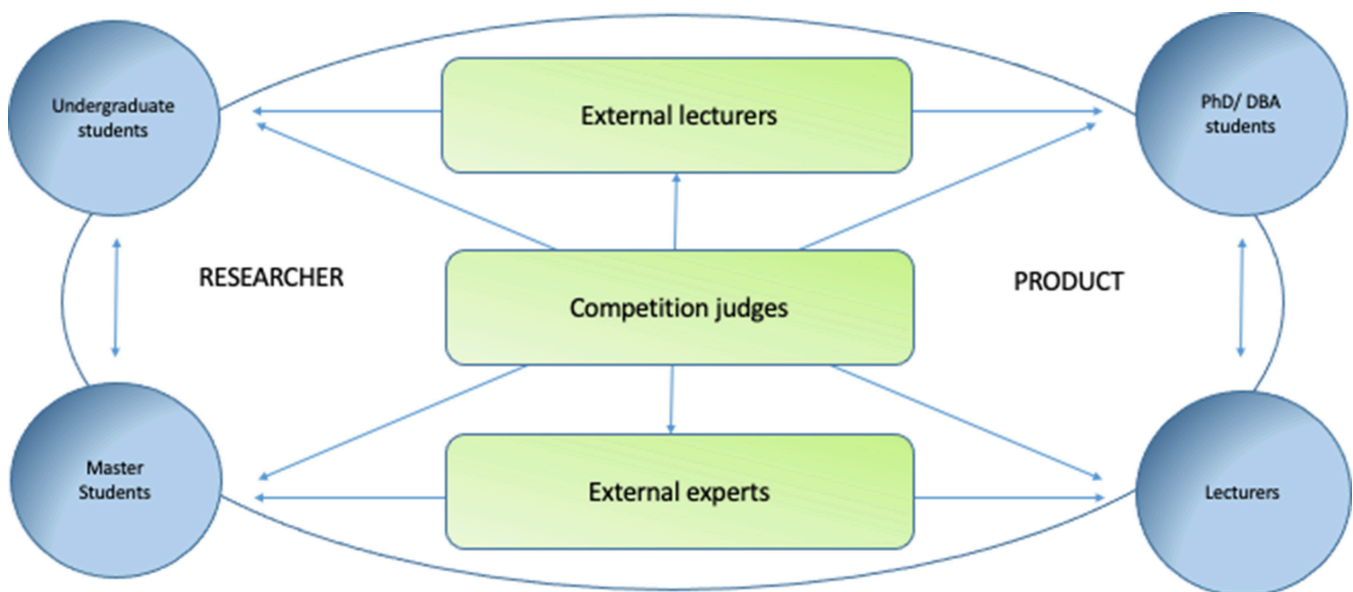
Data Collection Stage	Participants	Active Participation
Stage 1: Formation	5 research methods experts	Informal play of concept, providing critical feedback on the functionality.
Stage 2: Pilot	62 masters' students undertaking the research methods module Senior lecturer	Actively testing the resource over a 12-week period, highlighting practical challenges and elements that worked well.

	7 undergraduate students	
Stage 3: Finesse	3 doctoral students	The resource was actively used in an undergraduate class to test the feasibility for a different educational level, while feedback was sought synchronously through presenting the game in two workshop-style conferences or to research methods experts where they could trial the game and provide continuous feedback on opportunities and challenges for further development.
	93 research methods experts	The game was also presented at two international competitions where finer critiques were gathered to develop the resource.
Stage 4: Distribution	6 universities and different faculties on a global scale	This stage allowed for the dissemination of the game to be trialed at an international level and within different faculties to assess any further development requirements.

Source: Author.

To identify the stakeholders in this PAR project, I created a PAR stakeholder map exhibited in in [Figure 2](#) below:

Figure 2. PAR stakeholder map applied to this case study.



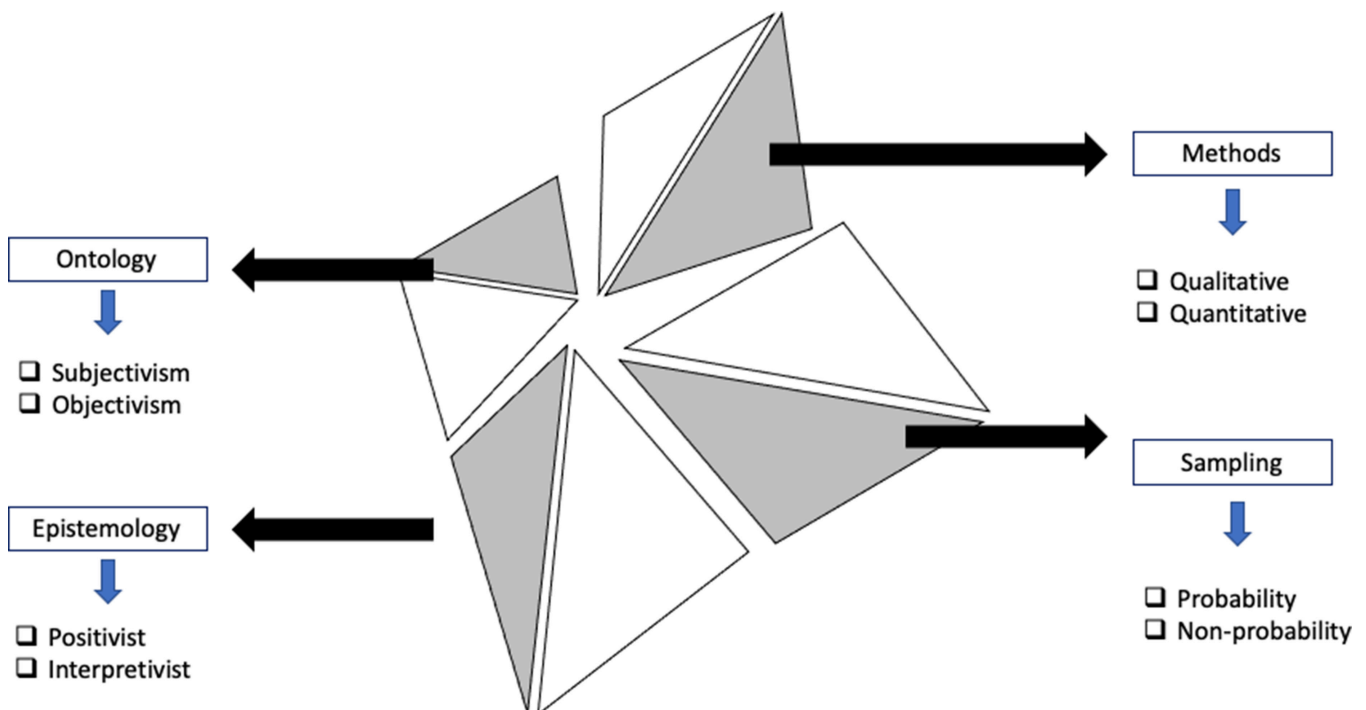
Source: Author.

Stage 1 Formation

While designing the teaching resource, I sought feedback through active participation in soft trials with five internal university research methods lecturers. As the resource was still being designed, I refer to this as the formation stage. It was important to get the concept correct and to ensure I had correctly applied the principles of research methods before involving students in the active learning process.

The first attempt was a paper and pencil version of a popular children’s game “fortune teller,” also called a chatterbox or paku-paku, which is a form of origami used in children’s games. Typically, children choose a color, which then opens a flap which leads to a further choice, which then refers to another flap and choice, and so on. Instead of colors, I trialed the notion with key concepts that are complicated to understand in research methods, such as ontology, epistemology, methods, and sampling as can be seen in [Figure 3](#).

Figure 3. Research methods fortune teller.



Source: Author.

An informal trial with established research methods experts demonstrated multiple challenges with this gaming concept for teaching research methods:

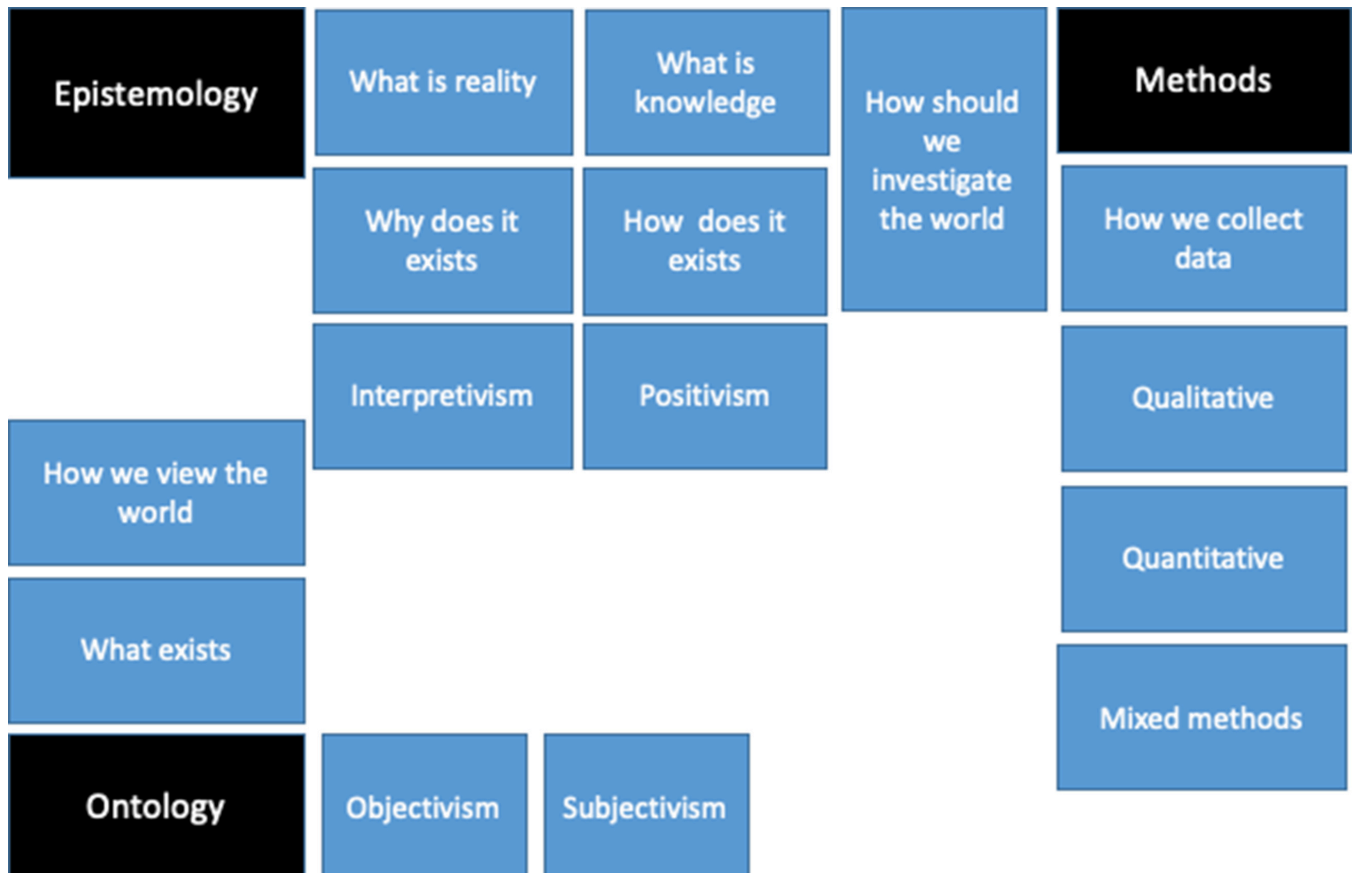
- The visibility was limited and thus the opportunity to share knowledge with the intended wider student community was insufficient.
- The functionality was too limited for the complex topic of research methods.
- The durability of the gaming material was very limited.
- The ability to provide a broader overview of the context of research methods was lacking.
- Some of the key components of gamification such as participation, aesthetics, collaboration, and competition were lacking on most levels.
- Gaming elements such as avatars, timers, and audio were not incorporated.

The concept of using the fortune teller design for teaching research methods was fundamentally flawed. Although the main objective was to facilitate the students' understanding of research methods and a game was not a necessity, I wanted to incorporate some of the key features of gamification which are characterized by clear rules and structures of playing ([Keusch, 2020](#)). [Adamou \(2018\)](#) states that three essential components are necessary for a game.

- Game ingredients: goals, autonomy, rules, and feedback.
- Game components: collaboration, aesthetic, and bonus features.
- Game elements: avatars, timers, and audio.

Based on my desire to incorporate Adamou's (2018) essential gaming blocks, I went back to the drawing board and started to lay out a game with a design that incorporated some of these key features as shown in [Figure 4](#). This time, I focused on creating a practical narrative with a more visual overview of the topic. I gained insight into the feasibility of this design through participative action from the program leader who had extensive experience in supervising undergraduate and postgraduate dissertations.

Figure 4. Research methods board game template.

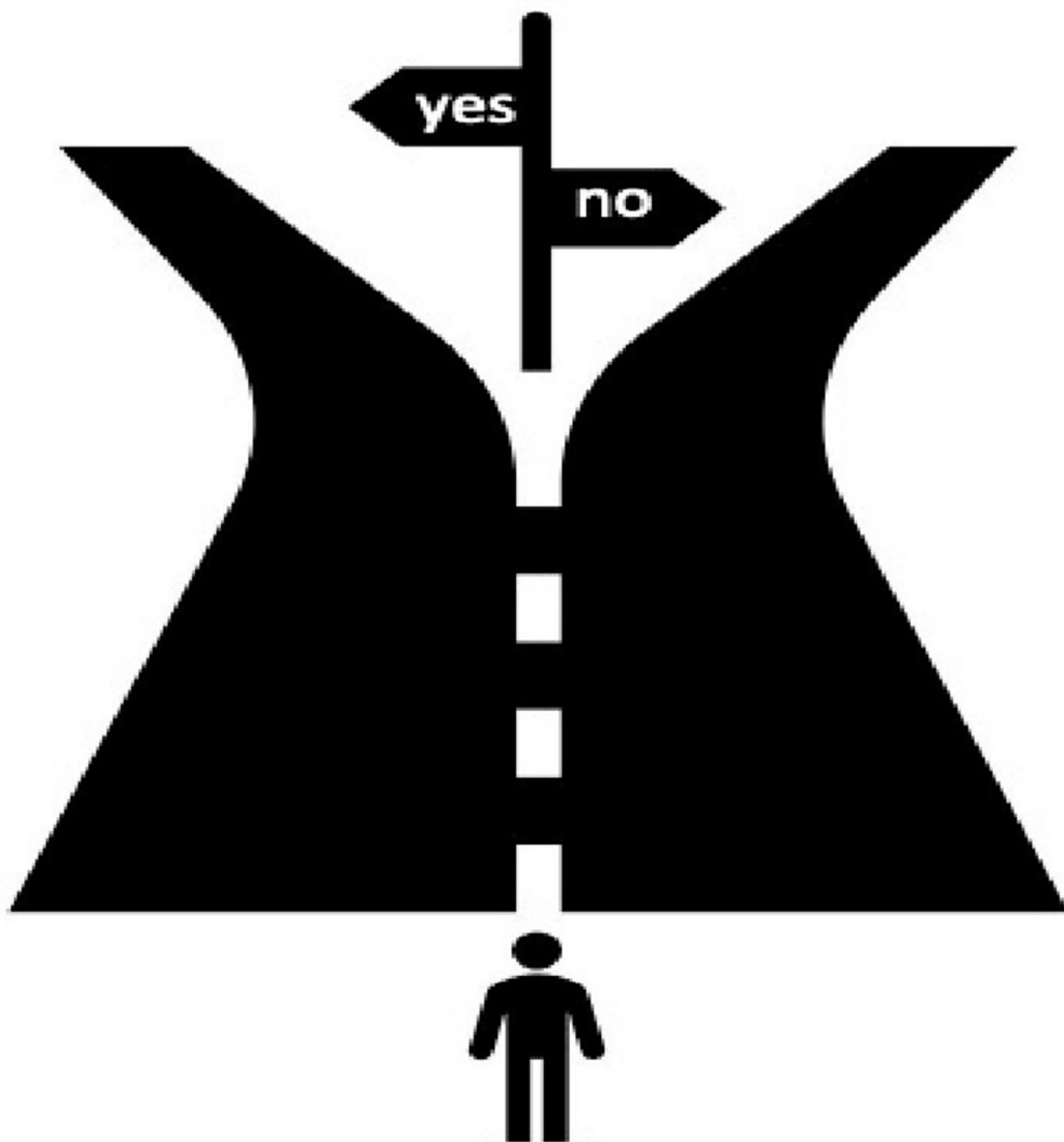


Source: Author.

Insight I gained led me to the conclusion that the narrative did not follow a logical flow and that I needed a concept that represented a more transparent decision tree. Although the design improved, many desired concepts of gamification were still lacking, such as a structure, an element of competition, a beginning, and an end.

Through the practice of deep reflection and reflexivity, and listening to myself holistically, I heard myself say to my students repeatedly when teaching research methods: “Research is a journey, not a destination.” Translating my own language into a visual representation, the first image that sparked the concept of the roadmap is captured below in [Figure 5](#).

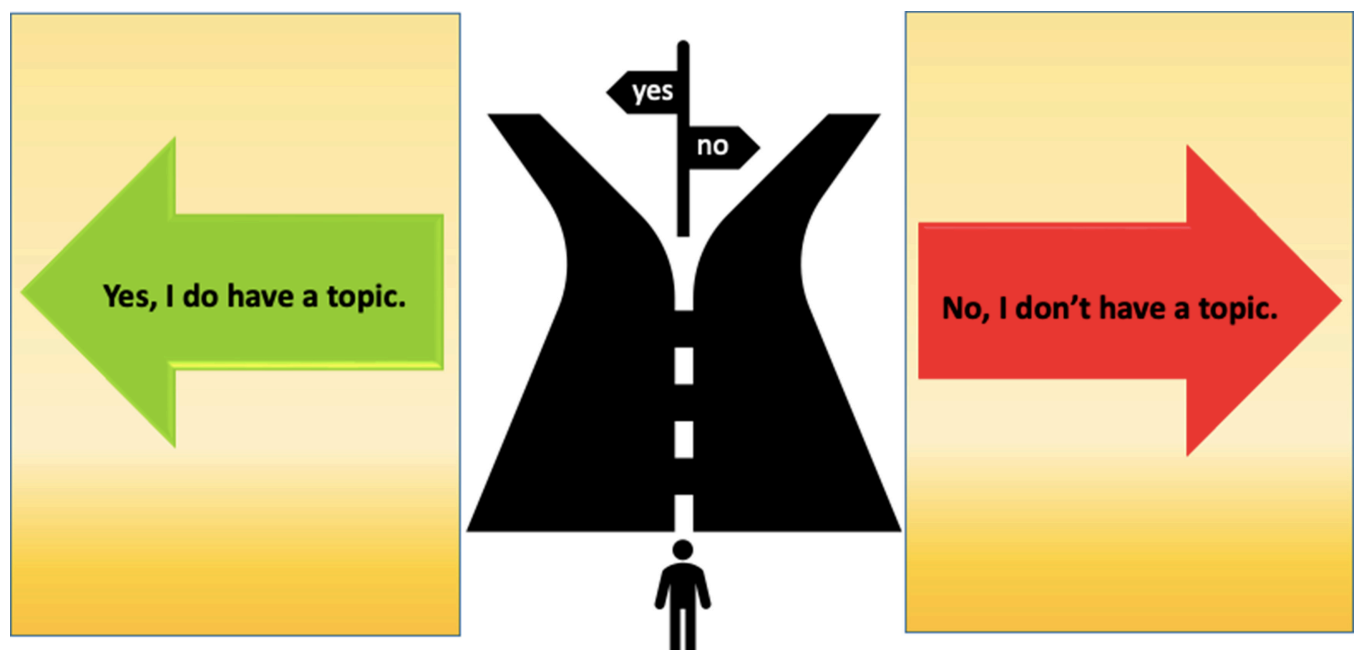
Figure 5. Choosing a path.



Source: Author.

Subsequently, I applied this concept to a known stumbling block for students: how to choose a topic for their dissertation. I started to develop the gaming concept further by including playing cards, as can be seen in [Figure 6](#).

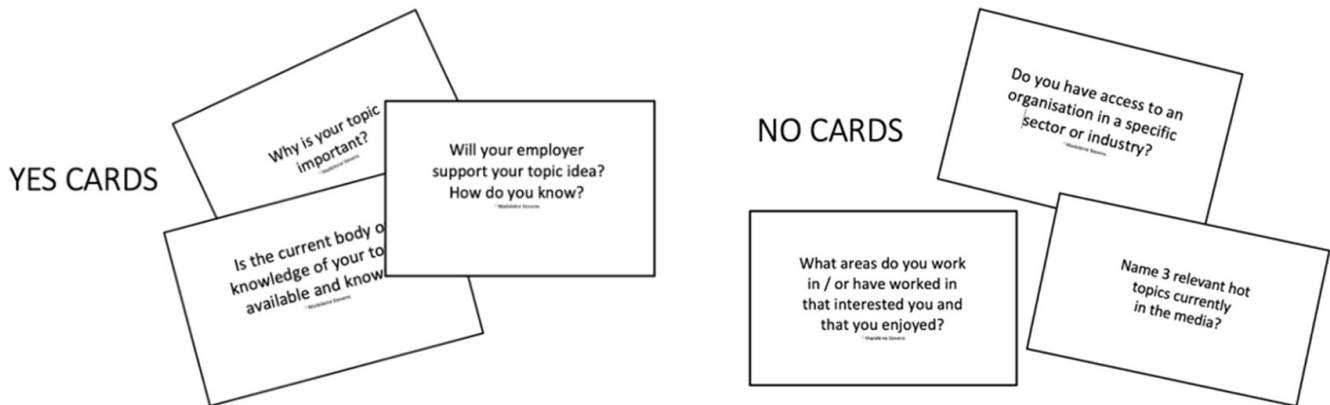
Figure 6. Choosing a research topic.



Source: Author.

I designed supporting “yes” cards with questions on the cards aimed to stimulate critical thinking and gentle probing of the validity of the topic. I designed the “no” cards similarly to help students who did not have a topic identified, to reflect, and to challenge their thinking in a safe environment and spur feedback from their lecturer and peers. Sample cards can be seen in [Figure 7](#).

Figure 7. Sample topic cards.



Source: Author.

The flow of the development of the game now became clearer and more transparent in my own mind. I researched the design of roadmaps and how they were used in creating fun games and challenges at both pedagogical (child education) and andragogical (adult education) levels, and the structure started formulating in my mind. Eventually, I put it down on paper. The development of the RMR game evolved through trials of various designs, which were subject to self-critique by practicing reflection and reflexivity as central to the research.



Section Summary

- This section highlights that creating a new framework/design/concept/game requires several attempts, and failure is a natural part of the process.
- Reflection, reflexivity, and self-critique are an essential process to make progress.
- An overview is provided of how different phases of data collection through PAR could strategically contribute to continuous improvement of the intended product or process.

Research Practicalities

I believe that PAR was the most effective methodology for driving continuous change and improvement for this project. The success of using PAR ultimately lies in the active participation of the stakeholders as identified in [Figure 2](#). The first iterations of the RMR game were based on the input and feedback of the research methods experts as the active participants. To further explore the effectiveness and feasibility of the game, the game was ready to be piloted by students.

Stage 2 Pilot

For the next iteration, I conducted research through active participation from 62 Human Resource Management students undertaking their master's degree. The game was played over the course of the module comprising 12 classes, which allowed time for the students to reflect with me as the researcher on the effectiveness of the game. Reflection through collective discussion in class helped me and the participants make sense of the game experience, which led to action through improvement.

The cohort was made up of three separate classes due to large student numbers as shown in [Table 2](#):

Table 2. Overview of pilot study participants

Postgraduate Classes	Student Numbers	Lecturers
Full time	25 students	Snr lecturer 1
Part time afternoon	15 students	Snr lecturer 2 , module leader, (researcher)
Part time evening	22 students	Snr lecturer 2, module leader (researcher)

Source: Author.

The first four iterations were informed based on student feedback while piloting the game. When using PAR, both the objectives of improved competence for students and practice for researchers are combined

to change social reality through active group participation ([Bell et al., 2004](#)). To achieve this, the research approach was jointly designed through active discussion among the students, the lecturer, and the program leader. Student feedback was recorded via fieldnotes in each location where the roadmaps were utilized, after which reflection from the lecturer (and researcher) was adapted to enhance the solution (the research roadmap). Sometimes, both students and lecturer scribbled on the maps to mark and incorporate changes for improvement.

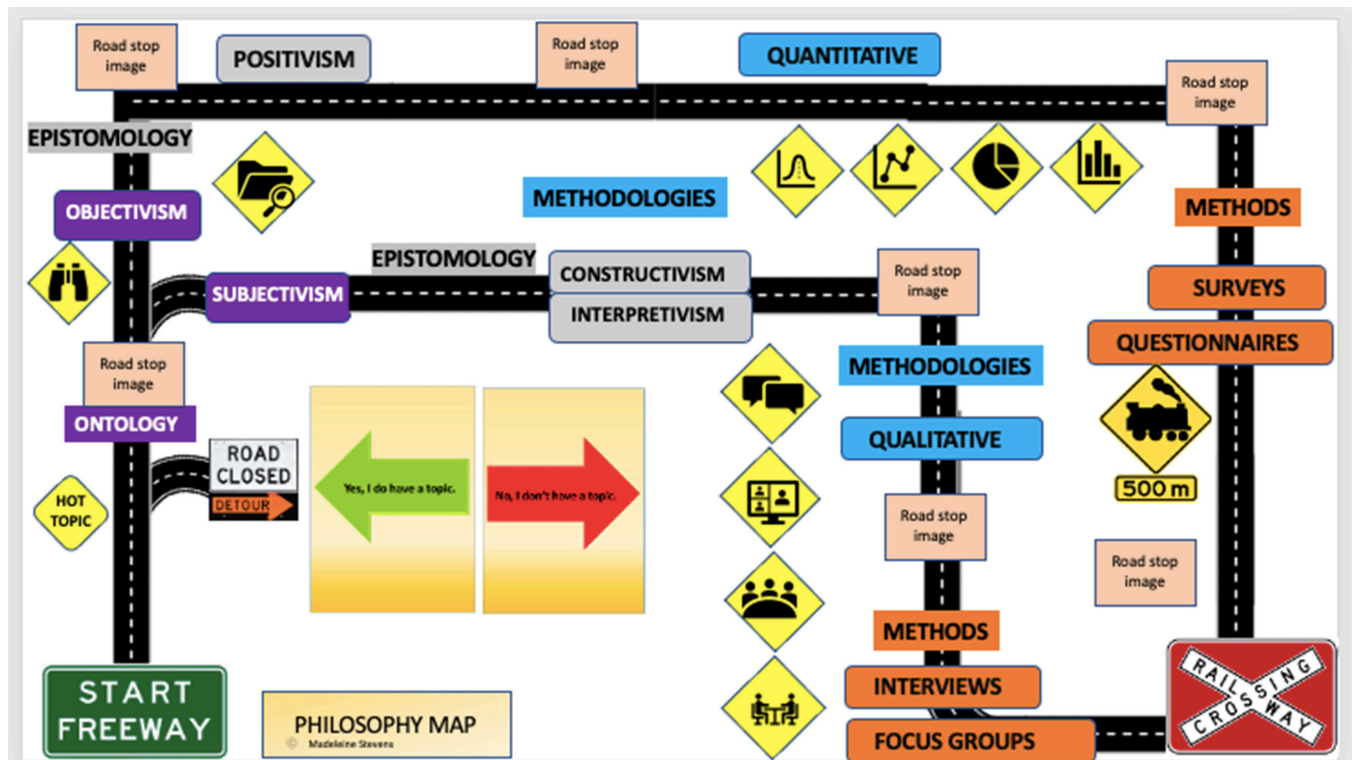
Prior to meeting with students, I met with the other lecturer to discuss how the game could be used during the pilot study. During the course of the pilot, I regularly met with the other senior lecturer to gain critical feedback which we both reflected on throughout the 12-week module.

It was very important to gain the feedback of my co-lecturer to drive quality and share knowledge expertise as essentially the purpose of the game is to improve the learning and knowledge gain experience for students, but equally, it was important to simplify the challenge of teaching the difficult topic of research methods.

Initially, only one research roadmap existed. Through continuous feedback and discussion of using local and experiential knowledge, I realized that due to the multifaceted topic, more than one research roadmap was required to address the individual needs of students operating at different levels of complexity. The first iteration of the maps encompassed all three of these components of teaching research methods in one map.

By practicing reflection and reflexivity, my co-lecturer and I, along with my students, realized that the required content was too overwhelming to include in one map. In response to this, the research roadmaps developed into three maps. This resulted in the design of a game that focused specifically on research philosophy, as shown in [Figure 8](#). The topic cards from [Figure 7](#) were incorporated into this map.

Figure 8. Research philosophy roadmap



Source: Author.

By obtaining and reflecting on the student feedback in class and from the second lecturer, I developed a second road map with a focus on qualitative research shown in [Figure 9](#). Feedback from students indicated that playing cards were helpful to stimulate critical thinking. In response to this qualitative objective setting, I incorporated cards into the roadmap game as shown in [Figure 10](#), with examples of qualitative objective setting cards.

Figure 9. Qualitative research roadmap

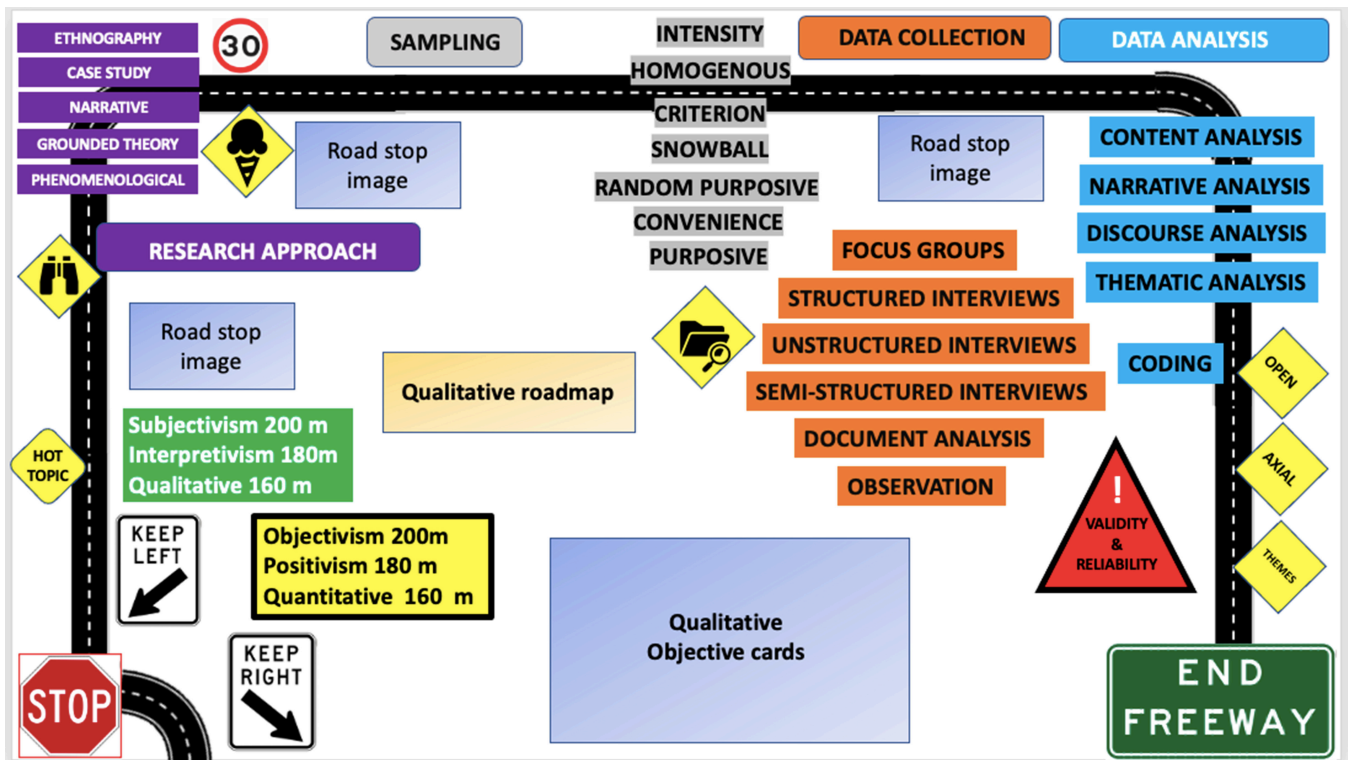
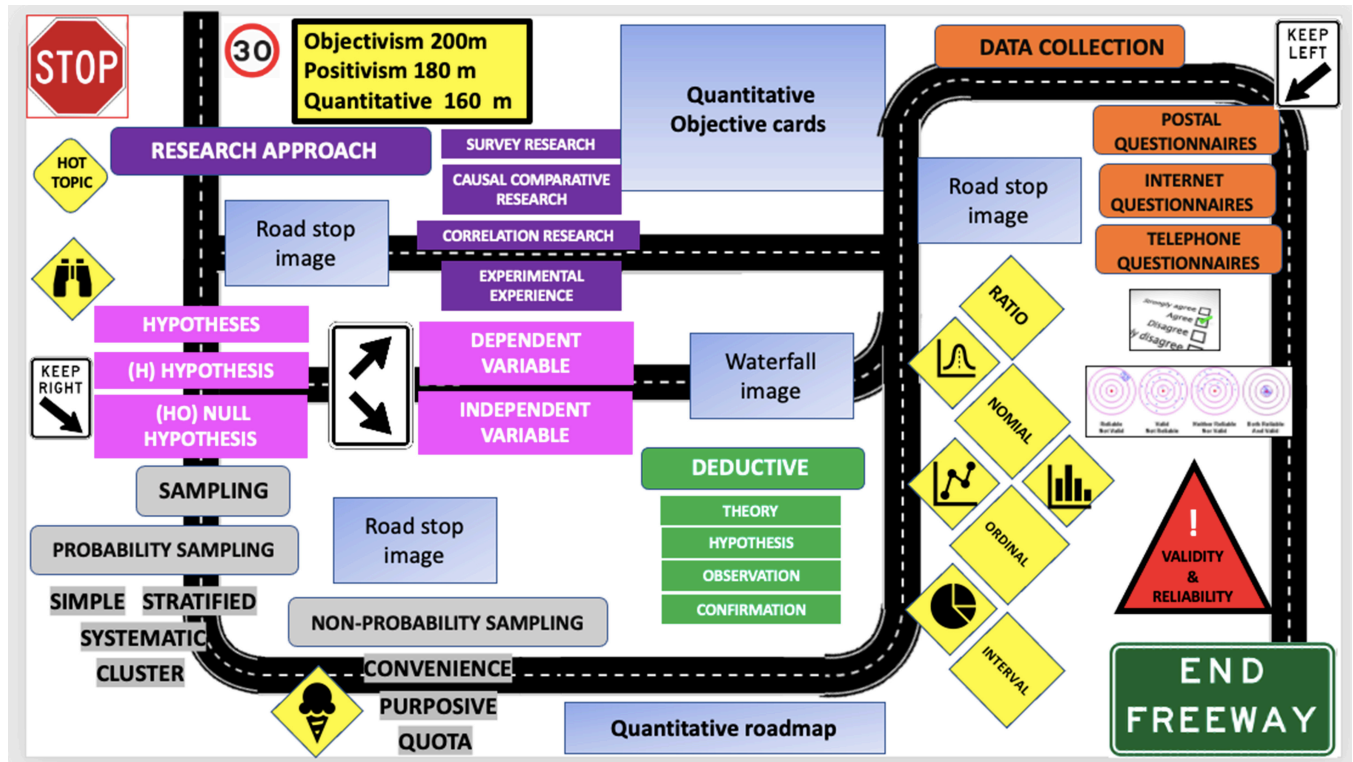


Figure 10. Qualitative Research Roadmap with examples of qualitative objective setting cards.



Finally, I designed a third roadmap, specific to quantitative research with supporting playing cards, shown in [Figure 11](#).

Figure 11. Quantitative Research Roadmap.



This section contains three overlapping boxes with text prompts:

- Top box:** Includes a graphic with a pie chart, a normal distribution curve, and a bar chart. Below it, the text reads "QUANTITATIVE COMPLETE THE SENTENCE...".
- Middle box:** Contains the text "To analyse..." followed by a small copyright notice "©Madeline Stevens".
- Bottom box:** Contains the text "To establish ..." followed by a small copyright notice "©Madeline Stevens".
- Right box:** Contains the text "To test ..." followed by a small copyright notice "©Madeline Stevens".

Source: Author.

Stage 3: Finessing

The fifth iteration was informed by active participation in a further study with 7 undergraduate students and 3 DBA/Ph.D. students where I actively used the resource to test the game's feasibility for a different educational level. As the game developed through constant feedback, it was time to gather further critical data from 93 research methods experts, which involved four conferences as presented in [Table 3](#) below.

Table 3. Data collection from research methods experts

Conference	Date	Competition	Location	Participants
16 th European Conference of Game Based Learning	6–7 October 2022	Finalist, 10 th International Educational games competition	Lisbon (hybrid)	17 participants and 2 judges Game play was presented
21 st European Conference of Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies	2–3 June 2022	Finalist: Innovation in the Teaching of Research Methodology Excellence Awards	Aveiro	12 participants and 2 judges Game was presented with option for participants to play afterwards
Learning, Teaching, and Student Experience Conference (LTSE), Chartered Association of Business Schools	24–25 May 2022		Belfast	35 participants who actively played the game
British Academy of Management Special Interest Group: Teaching research methods to business students: New and innovative approaches	17 May 2022		Liverpool	25 participants who actively played the game

Source: Author.

The feedback from the undergraduate and doctoral students confirmed that the game worked well at the undergraduate as well as the Master's level. Feedback from the conferences was critical in moving the game through the finessing stages. Reflecting on each experience directly led to action, influenced by the local context of each conference to drive change that improved the game ([Baum et al., 2006](#)). Establishing what action was needed required reflection on the constructive feedback as follows.

16th European Conference of Game Based Learning

- Reflection was needed on whether the game was universally applicable to all research methods modules.

21st European Conference of Research Methodology for Business and Management Studies

- The game passed several stages of the competition and achieved recognition of merit as a finalist in the competition.
- Participants suggested translating maps into different languages.
- Critiques were offered over the potential costs of the research roadmaps.
- Interested partners suggested future collaborations.
- A desire emerged for use of further cards to encourage discussion at more key map locations.
- Experts considered the accessibility of the game.

Learning, Teaching, and Student Experience Conference (LTSE), Chartered Association of Business Schools

- One participant did not agree that research philosophy could be represented in such a simplistic form.

British Academy of Management Special Interest Group: Teaching Research Methods to Business Students, New and Innovative Approaches

- Participants suggested reviewing the use of colors on the gameboard to recognize students with learning challenges.
- Participants suggested the roadmap design could be represented as a motorway with multiple lanes, each lane choosing a different research path.
- Topic cards could be divided into undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- I was invited to present and introduce the game at another institution.
- I received several requests to trial the game and met several interested collaborators.
- Participants expressed a strong preference for a physical boardgame.



Section Summary

- This section presents an overview of how I developed the research roadmap through stakeholder feedback.
- This section demonstrates how the use of PAR can have a significant impact on the outputs of a framework/concept/model/game through reflection on feedback and by converting the feedback into action.

Method in Action

A known challenge of using PAR is the equilibrium of power between the researcher and the participants, who both have experiential knowledge that can complement the knowledge of the other ([Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009](#)). I was extremely conscious of the power balance challenge throughout the PAR project and calibrated my own views with a simple direct message: “The game is for students to use with the aim to ease the understanding and enhance the learning of research methods. The students were not only my participants but also my customers, and the customer is king.” This reflective statement reminded me that although I had the power to take action to drive change, the students had the power as users of the game. Ultimately, their qualitative and quantitative feedback would be the measure of success, and thus, the upper hand in the power balance was theirs.

Applying this to my PAR study, although I took the “action” to address feedback and observations through fieldnotes, the students had the power in determining the success of the game. PAR is often underpinned by four values: empowerment, supportive relationships, social change, and learning as an ongoing process ([Nelson et al., 1998](#)). I believe the project was successful as these four values underpinned the process throughout.

The use of PAR by academics is often criticized, as it is regarded as time-consuming, unpredictable, and unlikely to attract competitive research funding ([Kavanagh et al., 2002](#)). In this case study, I agree entirely with the views of [Kavanagh et al. \(2002\)](#) on the element of unpredictability; however, through the process of PAR and the multiple stakeholders, we were able to secure internal funding to develop the game into a prototype.

The final product was recognized as a finalist in the 10th International Educational games competition as well as the Innovation in the Teaching of Research Methodology Excellence Awards, which I believe is a testament to the insightful, collaborative approach of PAR.

Building Confidence With Research Methods Lecturers

The initial views of research methods lecturers were positive. Nonetheless, it was challenging for them to use the roadmaps, without having had the opportunity to witness how I used them in class. Therefore, arguably there was an initial challenge with respect to consistency on how to use the roadmaps and provide a clear understanding of the rules and applications. I addressed these challenges by scheduling briefing sessions with demonstrations prior to lectures taking place. Despite these challenges, my fellow lecturers were enthusiastic and supported the pilot stage by trialing the roadmaps in some of their research methods lectures.



Section Summary

- Challenges are often unpredictable, and this requires flexibility from the researcher to learn and adapt.
- It is not always easy to take negative feedback on a project, especially when researchers have poured a lot of energy and commitment into it. Learn from the feedback and remember that feedback is only people’s opinions.

Practical Lessons Learned

When introducing the concept of new pedagogy for teaching research methods, it is worth recognizing the challenges of any strategic change management as a process through which changes are introduced ([Hornstein, 2015](#)). A practical lesson in the game development is that it would have perhaps been better to have more and earlier involvement with my fellow research methods lecturers who were brave enough to trial the map, without a full understanding of the initial design process. As with any change program, introducing change through small, incremental, and systematic steps is a better approach to drive change over time (Schroedel, 2019). A more collaborative approach could have arguably removed resistance to change, which can present itself in many clandestine approaches such as simply withholding information or subtle undermining of the change initiative ([Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2015](#)). Consistent with the findings of Danielle Littman and colleagues in 2021, values should serve as a critical, omnipresent reality through the process of PAR, which can help address the power equilibrium.



Section Summary

- When implementing a change, recognize and embrace change management principles.
- It is critical to ensure PAR methodology is underpinned by the values of empowerment, supportive relationships, social change, and learning as an ongoing process.
- Cost consideration should be well thought through and appropriately researched.
- Anticipate the unanticipated: allow sufficient time to address challenges and barriers along the journey of design and PAR.

Conclusion

The use of PAR to influence and drive change for improvement can be extremely effective. For PAR to be effective, it is important that the methodology is underpinned by four values: empowerment, supportive relationships, social change, and learning as an ongoing process.

If I was to conduct a similar project using PAR again, I would seek broader stakeholder involvement from the outset of the study. Although I gained insight through a comprehensive stakeholder group, this was achieved

through involvement in different stages of the project. Upon reflection, having a broader range of participants from the outset to represent each stakeholder group could have had a more balanced impact on the learning achieved.

When using PAR, ensure that as a researcher, you are cognizant of the power balance throughout and that the equilibrium remains balanced between the researcher and participants. The use of several iterations of obtaining feedback through discussion between researcher and participants can help ensure the final product meets the intended objectives, in this case, to enhance the learning and teaching of research methods for undergraduate and postgraduate students. I would highly recommend the use of PAR as a method to drive social learning change; however, the levels of complexity should not be underestimated.

A very special thank you to the SAGE developmental editor who enhanced the quality of the final case study through valuable and insightful feedback.



Section Summary

- All feedback is significant during the journey of PAR.
- PAR has no end destination, like a pot of gold under a rainbow.



Classroom Discussion Questions

1. How would you ensure the four key values of PAR are practiced in your case study?
2. How would you ensure that participation is encouraged and active if you were conducting PAR?
3. If you were contemplating using PAR, how would you determine who your research participants should include?
4. When choosing PAR as a method of participative inquiry, what steps would you take to ensure feedback, whether positive or negative, is listened to and acted upon?



Multiple-Choice Quiz Questions

1. How is PAR different from action research and participative action research?

- a. PAR is solely led by the researcher in identifying solutions.

Incorrect Answer

Feedback: This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is C.

- b. PAR is led by the researcher whilst observing participants, which leads to generation solutions.

Incorrect Answer

Feedback: This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is C.

- c. PAR actively involves the researcher as well as the participants in problem definition, method choice, data analysis, and generating solutions.

Correct Answer**Feedback:** Well done, correct answer

2. Based on Mackenzie et al. (2012, p. 17) Adaptive cycle of participatory research, what are the seven steps to achieving social learning?

a. Identify issues and needs, conduct research, analyze findings, present findings, review findings, recommend solutions, and test solutions.

Incorrect Answer**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is B.

b. Identify issues and needs, prioritize issues and needs, form research partnerships, conduct research, present findings, review process, and implement recommendations.

Correct Answer**Feedback:** Well done, correct answer

- c. Identify issues and needs, conduct research, analyze findings, recommend solutions, review process, and implement recommendations.

Incorrect Answer**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is B.

3. When using PAR, what timescale would be most appropriate and realistic to achieve social learning and implement change?

- a. One to three weeks.

Incorrect Answer

Feedback: This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is C.

b. One to two months.

Incorrect Answer

Feedback: This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is C.

c. A minimum of three months depending on the scale of the project.

Correct Answer

Feedback: Well done, correct answer

4. Which of the following practices are important for PARs?
Choose the best option from the choices available.

a. Reflection.

Incorrect Answer

Feedback: This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is B.

b. Reflection and reflexivity.

Correct Answer

Feedback: Well done, correct answer

c. Reflexivity.

Incorrect Answer

Feedback: This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is B.

5. When implementing recommendations that involve change, what is the best approach to facilitate the social learning to be adopted?

a. Adapting best practice principles of strategic change management.

Correct Answer

Feedback: Well done, correct answer

b. Implementing the change as quickly as possible to save costs and to allow the opportunity to trial the change.

Incorrect Answer

Feedback: This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is A.

c. To take a step back and let the organization implement the change, without the researcher's influence.

Incorrect Answer

Feedback: This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is A.

Web Resources

PARCEO. <https://parceo.org/>

Participatory Action Research Feminist Trailblazers and Good Troublemakers: <https://www.parfemtrailblazers.net/episodes/>

Patricia Maguire, Feminist Participatory Action Research: <https://www.patriciamaguire.net/>

References

Adamou, B. (2018). *Games and Gamification in market research: Increasing consumer engagement in research for business success*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Alvesson, M., & Sköldbäck, K. (2017). *Reflexive methodology: New vistas for qualitative research*. Sage.

Alvesson, M., & Sveningsson, S. (2015). *Changing organizational culture: Cultural change work in progress*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315688404>

Baum, F., MacDougall, C., & Smith, D. (2006). Participatory action research. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 60(10), 854–857. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jech.2004.028662>

- Bell, J., Cheney, G., Hoots, C., Kohrman, E., Schubert, J., Stidham, L., & Traynor, S. (2004). Comparative similarities and differences between action research, participative research, and participatory action research.
- Canlas, I. P., & Karpudewan, M. (2020). Blending the principles of participatory action research approach and elements of grounded theory in a disaster risk reduction education case study. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, (19), 1609406920958964.
- Fleming, N. D. (2001). *Teaching and learning styles: VARK strategies*. Christchurch.
- Hawk, T. F., & Shah, A. J. (2007). Using learning style instruments to enhance student learning. *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education*, 5(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4609.2007.00125.x>
- Haynes, K. (2012). Reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Organizational Research: Core Methods and Current Challenges*, 72–89. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0890334419830990>
- Hornstein, H. A. (2015). The integration of project management and organizational change management is now a necessity. *International Journal of Project Management*, 33(2), 291–298. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpro-man.2014.08.005>
- Karnieli-Miller, O., Strier, R., & Pessach, L. (2009). Power relations in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 19(2), 279–289. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732308329306>
- Kavanagh, A., Daly, J., & Jolley, D. (2002). Research methods, evidence and public health. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 26(4), 337–342. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-842X.2002.tb00181.x>
- Keusch, F. (2020). Gamification in web surveys. In P. Atkinson (Ed.), *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*. SAGE Publications, Ltd.
- Littman, D. M., Bender, K., Mollica, M., Erangey, J., Lucas, T., & Marvin, C. (2021). Making power explicit: Using values and power mapping to guide power-diverse participatory action research processes. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 49(2), 266–282. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22456>
- Mackenzie, J., Tan, P. L., Hoverman, S., & Baldwin, C. (2012). The value and limitations of participatory action research methodology. *J Hydrol*, 474, 11–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhydrol.2012.09.008>
- McGee, R. (2012). The self in participatory poverty research. In *Knowing poverty* (pp. 25–54). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781849771801>
- McMahon, T., & Thakore, H. (2006). Achieving constructive alignment: Putting outcomes first. *Quality of High-*

er Education, 3, 10–19.

Nelson, G., Ochocka, J., Griffin, K., & Lord, J. (1998). “Nothing about me, without me”: Participatory action research with self-help/mutual aid organizations for psychiatric consumer/survivors. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 26(6), 881–912. <https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1022298129812>

Ozano, K., & Khatri, R. (2018). Reflexivity, positionality and power in cross-cultural participatory action research with research assistants in rural Cambodia. *Educational Action Research*, 26(2), 190–204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09650792.2017.1331860>

<https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781529630404>