Once students have developed an idea, outlined a rationale for their research, and found the relevant literature, they then need to start mapping out what their project will look like. To do this, they will need to make some decisions about how they will answer their research questions. Research can be approached and conducted in many different ways. Broadly speaking, there are four interrelated stages of building a social science dissertation: research strategy: the type of data under investigation (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods); research design: the framework through which that data will be collected; research methods: the methods associated with collecting the type of data selected; and type of analysis: the techniques through which the data will be analysed. This chapter focuses on the decisions that students can make in relation to the first two stages: research strategy and research design.
7. Building Your Project

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