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Methodological Perspectives in Film Studies: A Bibliographic Scoping Review of Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary, and Transdisciplinary Research

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Abstract: Methodological integration has become a defining characteristic of contemporary film research as scholars increasingly combine perspectives from the humanities, social sciences, creative practice, and screen production. Widespread use of the terms multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary, however, has not been accompanied by consistent methodological criteria, making comparisons across studies increasingly difficult. Clarifying these distinctions is essential for improving methodological reporting and strengthening research design in film studies. A metadata-assisted bibliographic scoping review was conducted to examine methodological patterns in Scopus-indexed film research published between 2015 and 29 July 2026. Review procedures followed the Joanna Briggs Institute guidance and the PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR). Methodological coding relied on bibliographic metadata, including titles, abstracts, author keywords, DOI information, and journal records, because comprehensive access to publisher full texts was not consistently available. Eligibility screening reduced 714 records to a final corpus of 202 articles. Methodological classification identified 177 interdisciplinary studies (87.6%), 21 transdisciplinary studies (10.4%), and four multidisciplinary studies (2.0%). Interdisciplinary research dominated the literature, whereas transdisciplinary approaches appeared primarily in participatory documentary, community-based audiovisual production, and collaborative creative practice. Multidisciplinary research accounted for only a small proportion because disciplinary perspectives generally became integrated during the research process rather than remaining parallel. An evidence-based methodological classification framework emerges from the review and offers practical guidance for distinguishing multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary research in film studies. Greater conceptual consistency may improve methodological reporting, support future evidence syntheses, and strengthen the design of film and audiovisual research.

Keywords: film studies; bibliographic scoping review; interdisciplinary research; transdisciplinary research; multidisciplinary research; research methodology

INTRODUCTION

Film Studies as a Methodological Convergence

Film studies have undergone a substantial methodological transformation over the past decade. Once primarily associated with textual interpretation and aesthetic criticism, the field now encompasses diverse forms of inquiry that examine moving images through historical, cultural, technological, industrial, artistic, and social perspectives. This expansion reflects the growing complexity of audiovisual media and the increasing need to investigate film not only as a cultural text but also as a creative practice, technological artefact, industrial product, and social process.

Consequently, contemporary scholarship increasingly combines perspectives from the humanities, social sciences, digital humanities, communication, visual anthropology, and creative production to address research questions that extend beyond the explanatory capacity of individual disciplines (Bieberstein & Feyersinger, 2022; Magliano et al., 2026)

Evidence synthesized from the reviewed literature indicates that methodological diversity has become one of the defining characteristics of contemporary film research. Recent publications consistently demonstrate that analytical interpretation is frequently integrated with creative production, participatory practice, computational approaches, archival research, and collaborative knowledge generation across cinema, documentary, animation, and other audiovisual media (Ceuterick & Giannotti Mura, 2024; Hagener & Roig-Sanz, 2024; Holohan et al., 2025; Kapur & Ansari, 2022; Ryan & Staton, 2025). Rather than representing isolated methodological innovations, these developments suggest a broader transformation in which methodological convergence has become increasingly embedded throughout film scholarship.

The growing influence of academic filmmaking, research-creation, and practice-based research further illustrates this transformation. Creative production is no longer regarded solely as an artistic outcome but increasingly functions as a legitimate research process capable of generating empirical evidence, supporting analytical interpretation, and communicating scholarly knowledge through audiovisual forms. Similar developments are evident in digital film historiography, collaborative documentary production, and ethnographic filmmaking, where archival materials, visual analysis, creative decision-making, and participant collaboration operate within integrated research designs (Bee, 2024; Paiva & Albuquerque, 2025; Roinioti & Gluzman, 2025; Verstappen & Davies, 2024; Zhao, 2022). These methodological developments indicate that contemporary film studies increasingly values integration among analytical inquiry, creative practice, and collaborative knowledge production.

This methodological transformation is also closely related to broader changes in audiovisual production and research environments. Digital technologies, online distribution platforms, participatory media, and practice-based inquiry have expanded opportunities for collaboration among researchers, filmmakers, artists, cultural institutions, and local communities. Consequently, knowledge production increasingly emerges through interactions among academic research, creative practice, technological innovation, and public engagement rather than through isolated disciplinary perspectives. Methodological relationships are therefore becoming more important than disciplinary boundaries in explaining how contemporary film research is designed and conducted (Holohan et al., 2025; Roberti et al., 2024; Theocharis, 2025).

Cross-Disciplinary Dynamics in Film Studies

As methodological diversity has expanded, the concepts of multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary have become increasingly common throughout film scholarship. Although these terms are widely employed to describe collaborative and integrative research, their methodological meanings are often applied inconsistently. Some publications describe interdisciplinary research simply because they combine theoretical perspectives from different disciplines, while methodological procedures remain largely independent. Others characterise collaborative projects as transdisciplinary without demonstrating meaningful participation by practitioners, community organisations, or other non-academic stakeholders during research design, knowledge production, or interpretation. Recent methodological discussions similarly demonstrate continuing conceptual challenges in defining relationships among cinematic practice, disciplinary integration, and transdisciplinary knowledge production (Milyakina & Ojamaa, 2024; Paiva & Albuquerque, 2025).

Evidence synthesized from the reviewed literature suggests that methodological distinctions cannot be determined solely by counting the number of participating disciplines. Instead, meaningful differentiation depends on how theories, research methods, analytical procedures, creative practices, stakeholder participation, and research outputs are organised within the research process. Multidisciplinary studies generally retain parallel disciplinary perspectives while addressing a common research problem. Interdisciplinary studies integrate concepts, methods, and analytical procedures into a coordinated research design. Transdisciplinary studies extend this integration by incorporating practitioners, communities, creative collaborators, or other non-academic participants into one or more major stages of knowledge production. These distinctions indicate that methodological classification should be based on observable research characteristics rather than disciplinary labels alone (Bee, 2024; Holohan et al., 2025; Theocharis, 2025).

Previous bibliometric investigations have successfully documented publication trends, thematic development, and collaborative networks within film and television scholarships. Ratnasari et al. (2025), for example, demonstrated increasing thematic diversity within Indonesian film and television studies, while recent publications have explored methodological developments in digital film historiography, academic filmmaking, collaborative documentary production, animation research, and participatory audiovisual research (Bee, 2024; Bieberstein & Feyersinger, 2022; Ceuterick & Giannotti Mura, 2024; Hagener & Roig-Sanz, 2024; Ryan & Staton, 2025). Nevertheless, existing reviews rarely provide operational criteria capable of distinguishing multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary inquiry. As a result, methodological terminology is frequently used interchangeably, reducing conceptual clarity, limiting meaningful comparison across studies, and constraining the development of cumulative methodological knowledge in film studies.

Research Gap, Aim, and Research Questions

The reviewed literature collectively demonstrates that methodological integration has become increasingly prominent throughout contemporary film research. Practice-based inquiry, research-creation, collaborative documentary, digital film historiography, audience studies, production research, and audiovisual ethnography all illustrate the expanding methodological scope of the discipline (Hagener & Roig-Sanz, 2024; Paiva & Albuquerque, 2025; Roinioti & Gluzman, 2025; Ryan & Staton, 2025; Verstappen & Davies, 2024). Despite this diversification, consistent operational criteria for distinguishing disciplinary plurality, methodological integration, and collaborative knowledge production remain insufficiently developed. Consequently, researchers often employ multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary terminology without explicit methodological justification, making comparisons across studies increasingly difficult.

To address this methodological gap, the present study adopts a metadata-assisted bibliographic scoping review to examine how multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches are represented across contemporary film scholarship. Rather than evaluating the substantive findings of individual publications, the review focuses on methodological evidence extracted from bibliographic metadata, including titles, abstracts, author keywords, publication records, and DOI information. This approach enables the systematic identification of methodological characteristics across a large corpus of Scopus-indexed publications while maintaining transparent and reproducible classification procedures.

The review is guided by three interrelated research questions. First, how are multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches distributed across contemporary film

studies? Second, which methodological characteristics distinguish these three forms of inquiry in terms of research design, theoretical integration, stakeholder participation, and knowledge production? Third, how can evidence synthesized from the reviewed literature contribute to the development of an operational framework for methodological classification in film studies?

By examining relationships among research problems, theoretical foundations, methodological design, creative practice, stakeholder participation, analytical procedures, and research outputs, this review seeks to establish a more systematic basis for distinguishing multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary inquiry. The resulting framework is expected to improve methodological reporting, facilitate future evidence synthesis, and support the development of more transparent and consistent research design across film and audiovisual studies.

METHODS

Review Design and Eligibility Criteria

A metadata-assisted bibliographic scoping review with methodology-focused coding was conducted to examine how multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary approaches are represented in contemporary film studies. The review adopted the scoping review framework because the objective was to map methodological characteristics, identify conceptual patterns, and synthesise evidence across a heterogeneous body of literature rather than evaluate intervention effectiveness or estimate pooled outcomes. Scoping reviews are particularly appropriate for research fields characterised by conceptual diversity, emerging terminology, and methodological variation (Grønstad, 2026; Khalil et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2022).

Methodological procedures followed by the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) guidance for scoping reviews (Aromataris et al., 2024; Peters et al., 2022), while reporting adhered to the PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) (Tricco et al., 2018). Bibliographic metadata constituted the principal analytical unit because comprehensive access to publisher full texts was not consistently available across the reviewed corpus. Titles, abstracts, author keywords, DOI information, publication sources, and journal metadata therefore provided the empirical basis for methodological coding. Comparable metadata-based approaches have been applied in bibliometric research, thematic mapping, and the systematic analysis of large audiovisual datasets (Elitaş et al., 2025; Oiva et al., 2024; Öztürk et al., 2024).

Eligibility criteria followed the Population–Concept–Context (PCC) framework recommended for scoping reviews (Peters et al., 2022). Peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2015, and 29 July 2026 represented the population. The conceptual scope included multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary, collaborative, practice-led, and research-creation approaches. Film, cinema, documentary, animation, audiovisual media, screen production, and moving-image research defined the review context. Records entered the final dataset when film or audiovisual practice represented the principal research object, methodological approach, production process, or scholarly contribution. Bibliographic verification required every included record to contain a valid DOI.

Search Strategy and Record Selection

Scopus served as the sole bibliographic database because of its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed publications across the arts, humanities, and interdisciplinary research. Database selection also reflected recent methodological practices in bibliographic mapping and audiovisual scoping research that employ structured indexing systems to support transparent

retrieval and reproducible search procedures (Elitaş et al., 2025; Liu, 2025; Öztürk et al., 2024). Literature retrieval was conducted on 29 July 2026 using combinations of film-related terminology and keywords describing disciplinary relationships and creative research practices. Search fields included article titles, abstracts, and author keywords, while retrieval was restricted to journal articles indexed within the Arts and Humanities subject area and published between 2015 and 2026.

Sequential filtering reduced the retrieved dataset from 3,850 records to 714 journal articles eligible for title-and-abstract screening. Topical relevance determined the first screening stage, whereas methodological relevance and DOI verification guided eligibility assessment. Articles lacking sufficient methodological information or valid DOI records were excluded before methodological coding. The complete search strategy and screening process are presented in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1. Scopus search strategy

Component	Search terms and filters
Query	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("film studies" OR "cinema studies" OR "film research" OR filmmaking OR "film production" OR "screen production" OR "screen studies" OR documentary OR animation OR audiovisual OR "audiovisual research" OR "moving image") AND (multidisciplin* OR interdisciplin* OR transdisciplin* OR "cross-disciplinary" OR "integrated research" OR "collaborative research" OR "practice-based research" OR "practice-led research" OR "research-creation")) Filters: 2015-2026; Arts and Humanities; Article.

Source: Author's Documentation

Data Extraction and Methodological Classification

Data extraction recorded publication year, authorship, journal title, DOI, language, abstract, author keywords, methodological terminology, disciplinary domains, and classification outcomes. Coding focused on methodological evidence reported in bibliographic metadata rather than detailed procedural information available only in complete publications. Comparable coding strategies have been recommended for scoping and mapping reviews and have been applied in large-scale audiovisual research combining structured data, classification, and qualitative interpretation (Khalil et al., 2024; Oiva et al., 2024; Pollock et al., 2023).

Six operational indicators guided methodological classification: research problem, theoretical relationships, methodological design, data sources, stakeholder participation, and research outputs. Multidisciplinary studies were identified when disciplinary perspectives addressed a common research problem while remaining methodologically independent. Interdisciplinary studies demonstrated explicit integration of concepts, theories, analytical procedures, data sources, or creative practices within a coordinated research design. Transdisciplinary studies incorporated substantive participation by practitioners, communities, creative collaborators, service users, or other non-academic actors during one or more stages of problem formulation, production, interpretation, dissemination, or application of research outcomes. Methodological labels assigned by original authors were retained for descriptive purposes but did not determine the final classification because operational coding relied exclusively on predefined classification criteria.

Table 2. Operational criteria for methodological classification

Category	Relationship among disciplines	Stakeholder role	Decision criterion
Multidisciplinary	Perspectives or methods remain identifiable and are used in parallel.	Usually absent or consultative.	Separate disciplinary contributions address a shared film-related problem.
Interdisciplinary	Concepts, methods, data, or creative procedures are integrated.	Participants mainly provide data unless otherwise stated.	Integration changes the analytical or production design.
Transdisciplinary	Academic knowledge is combined with practitioner or community knowledge.	Non-academic actors influence decisions, interpretation, ownership, or use.	Substantive participation occurs in at least one major research stage.

Source: Author's Documentation

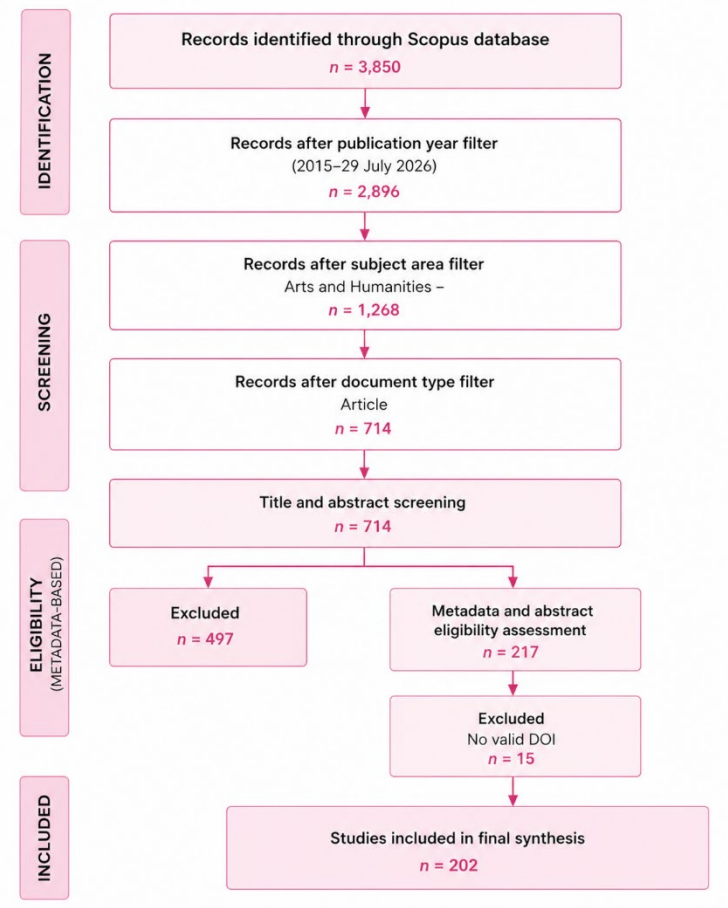


Figure 1. PRISMA-ScR Process

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Study Selection

The literature search identified 3,850 records indexed in the Scopus database. Following the application of publication year restrictions (2015–2026), document type, and subject area filters, 714 journal articles remained eligible for title and abstract screening. During the screening stage, 497 records were excluded because they did not primarily investigate film, cinema, animation, documentary, or audiovisual research from a methodological perspective. The remaining 217 publications proceeded to metadata eligibility assessment, where DOI verification and

bibliographic completeness were examined. Fifteen records lacking valid DOI information or sufficient bibliographic metadata were excluded, resulting in a final review corpus of 202 articles.

The review process followed a transparent and reproducible selection procedure consistent with the PRISMA-ScR framework. Rather than evaluating methodological quality at the full-text level, eligibility was determined through bibliographic metadata because the objective of this review was to classify methodological characteristics across a large body of indexed publications. Figure 1 summarises the complete identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion procedures, providing a transparent overview of the review workflow.

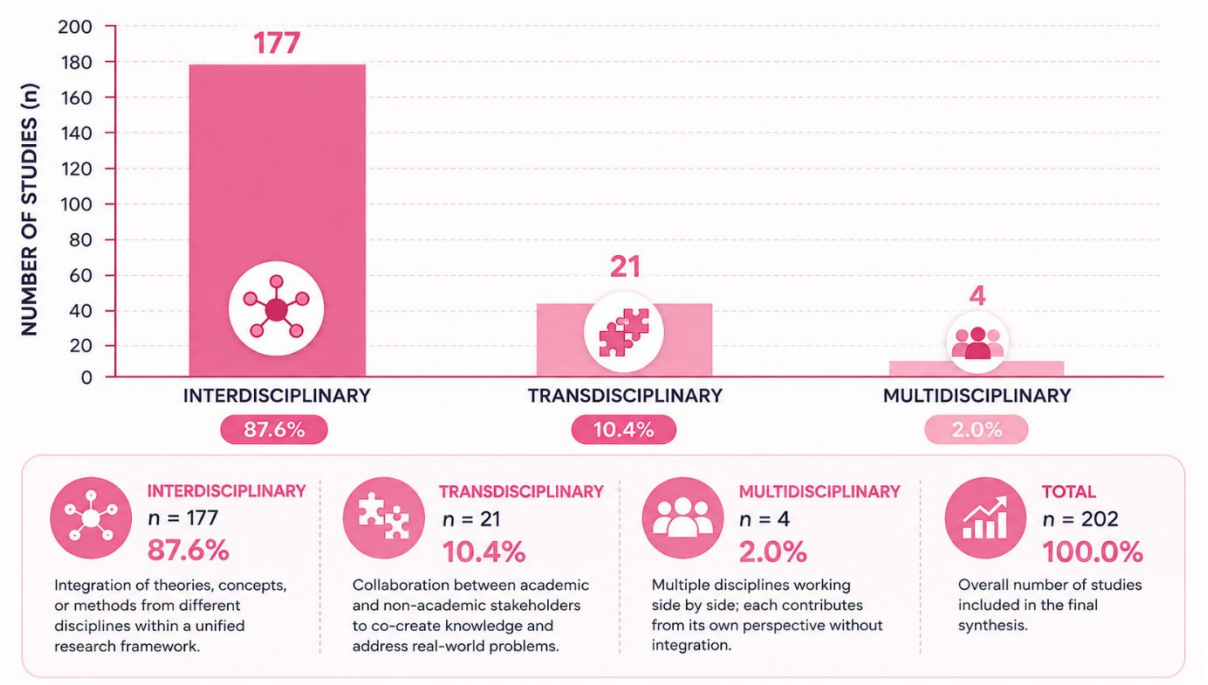


Figure 2. Methodological Classification of Included Studies

Table 3. Final study-selection flow

Stage	n	Decision
Scopus records identified	3,850	Identification
After publication-period filter	2,896	Retained
After Arts and Humanities filter	1,268	Retained
After Article filter	714	Screened
Excluded by title and abstract	497	Excluded
Assessed through metadata and abstract	217	Eligibility
No valid DOI	15	Excluded
Included in the final synthesis	202	Included
Classification completed	202	Analysed

Source: Author's Documentation

Methodological Distribution

Methodological coding classified 177 publications (87.6%) as interdisciplinary, 21 (10.4%) as transdisciplinary, and 4 (2.0%) as multidisciplinary (Figure 2). These findings demonstrate that interdisciplinary inquiry has become the predominant methodological orientation within contemporary film studies, while multidisciplinary approaches appear only sporadically and transdisciplinary research continues to emerge in specific areas of collaborative practice.

Beyond numerical distribution, the classification reveals a clear methodological tendency within

contemporary film studies. The predominance of interdisciplinary research indicates that contemporary film scholarship increasingly relies on integrated analytical frameworks rather than isolated disciplinary perspectives. Although transdisciplinary studies represent a comparatively small proportion of the reviewed corpus, their presence reflects an emerging orientation toward collaborative knowledge production involving researchers, creative practitioners, and community stakeholders. In contrast, multidisciplinary approaches remain relatively uncommon because disciplinary perspectives frequently become integrated during the research process instead of operating independently.

The predominance of interdisciplinary research reflects broader developments within contemporary film scholarship, where methodological integration increasingly connects film analysis with media studies, anthropology, communication, cultural studies, digital humanities, education, history, and creative practice. Similar tendencies have been reported in artistic film research, collaborative screen production, and interdisciplinary animation education, all of which illustrate how increasingly complex research questions require the integration of multiple theoretical and methodological traditions rather than reliance on a single disciplinary perspective (Gansing, 2022; Taylor et al., 2023; Cook et al., 2025). Comparable methodological diversification is also evident in Indonesian practice-led film research, where experimental cinema connects artistic production, critical analysis, and film education (Pauhrizi et al., 2025).

Although transdisciplinary publications represented a smaller proportion of the reviewed corpus, their methodological significance extends beyond numerical frequency because these studies consistently involved collaboration between academic researchers and non-academic stakeholders throughout the research process. This characteristic distinguishes transdisciplinary inquiry from interdisciplinary integration and reflects a growing orientation toward socially engaged, practice-based, and community-centred audiovisual research (Dorado Zúñiga, 2022; de la Horra & Grill, 2023; Sicondolfo et al., 2022).

The Dominance of Interdisciplinary Approaches in Film Studies

The overwhelming dominance of interdisciplinary research suggests that contemporary film studies increasingly recognise moving images as complex cultural phenomena that cannot be adequately explained through a single disciplinary perspective. Contemporary film research addresses issues that intersect technological innovation, audiovisual production, digital culture, audience behaviour, historical interpretation, and creative practice. Consequently, researchers increasingly integrate concepts, analytical frameworks, and methodological procedures originating from communication studies, anthropology, sociology, history, digital humanities, education, psychology, and media studies to investigate cinematic texts, production processes, audiences, and audiovisual culture.

This methodological transformation is closely associated with changes in the production and circulation of audiovisual media. Digital technologies, streaming platforms, online archives, virtual production, and computational approaches have expanded both the scope and complexity of film research. These developments encourage methodological integration because understanding contemporary audiovisual phenomena increasingly requires expertise that extends across multiple disciplinary traditions rather than remaining confined within conventional film analysis (Gansing, 2022; Harder et al., 2026; Heath & Richardson, 2026).

Evidence synthesised across the reviewed publications demonstrates that methodological integration occurs in multiple research contexts. Digital film research combines technological

experimentation with historical and humanities inquiry to investigate moving-image infrastructures and emerging narrative environments (Gansing, 2022; Harder et al., 2026). Academic filmmaking positions creative production as both a research process and a mode of scholarly communication, thereby connecting artistic practice with analytical investigation (Taylor et al., 2023; Braeuner, 2024). Similarly, ethnographic filmmaking integrates visual anthropology, documentary production, and the relationship between scientific and aesthetic inquiry within coherent methodological designs that generate both audiovisual artefacts and scholarly knowledge (Kairys, 2024).

The reviewed literature also demonstrates that interdisciplinary research increasingly incorporates practice-based inquiry and research-creation. Within these approaches, creative production is not merely treated as an artistic outcome but functions as an integral component of knowledge generation. Analytical interpretation, creative experimentation, and audiovisual production therefore become mutually dependent activities within a unified research design. This convergence reflects broader developments in contemporary creative research, where theoretical inquiry and creative practice are increasingly understood as complementary rather than separate forms of scholarship (Gansing, 2022; Taylor et al., 2023; Braeuner, 2024; Andrews et al., 2024).

Collectively, these findings indicate that interdisciplinarity in film studies extends beyond the simple combination of disciplinary knowledge. Instead, it represents methodological integration in which theories, research methods, analytical procedures, and creative practices operate within a coherent research design. This observation is consistent with recent screen-production and animation research that emphasises methodological flexibility, conceptual convergence, and increasing interaction between analytical inquiry and creative practice (Taylor et al., 2023; Mesías, 2023).

Emerging Role of Transdisciplinary Research

Although only twenty-one publications were classified as transdisciplinary, these studies demonstrate a distinct methodological orientation that differs substantially from conventional interdisciplinary research. Rather than integrating academic disciplines alone, transdisciplinary inquiry actively incorporates practitioners, filmmakers, artists, community organisations, Indigenous groups, policy actors, and other non-academic stakeholders into the production of research knowledge.

Participatory documentary, collaborative archival practice, community-based audiovisual production, and participatory research-creation consistently illustrate this methodological orientation. Research participants contribute not only as research subjects but also as collaborators involved in problem formulation, audiovisual production, interpretation of findings, and dissemination of knowledge (Dorado Zúñiga, 2022; de la Horra & Grill, 2023; Sicondolfo et al., 2022). Intercultural audiovisual laboratories similarly demonstrate how collaborative production enables local experiences, community knowledge, and Indigenous epistemologies to become integral components of the research process rather than supplementary sources of data (Dorado Zúñiga, 2022).

Despite its methodological significance, the relatively limited number of transdisciplinary publications suggests that collaborative research remains challenging to implement. Meaningful stakeholder participation requires long-term engagement, shared decision-making, ethical negotiation, and sustained collaboration throughout multiple stages of research and creative

production. These practical requirements distinguish transdisciplinary inquiry from interdisciplinary research and may explain why its adoption remains comparatively limited despite increasing scholarly interest.

The present review indicates that stakeholder participation constitutes one of the principal methodological characteristics distinguishing transdisciplinary research from interdisciplinary inquiry. This finding is consistent with collaborative audiovisual and research-creation projects in which research outcomes emerge through reciprocal interaction between academic expertise, community knowledge, and practical experience (Dorado Zúñiga, 2022; de la Horra & Grill, 2023; Sicondolfo et al., 2022). Consequently, transdisciplinary film research appears particularly relevant for socially engaged audiovisual projects addressing cultural heritage, environmental communication, community empowerment, participatory media practice, and collaborative creative production.

Rethinking the Position of Multidisciplinary Research

Only four publications satisfied the operational criteria for multidisciplinary research. Although numerous studies described themselves as multidisciplinary, closer examination of bibliographic metadata revealed that most actually demonstrated methodological integration characteristic of interdisciplinary inquiry.

This finding represents one of the most notable outcomes of the review. Rather than indicating the disappearance of disciplinary diversity, the limited number of multidisciplinary studies suggests that contemporary film research increasingly integrates disciplinary perspectives during the research process itself. Multiple disciplinary contributions therefore tend to converge within shared analytical frameworks instead of remaining parallel throughout the investigation.

This discrepancy also demonstrates that methodological terminology is not always applied consistently within film scholarship. Authors frequently use the terms multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary interchangeably despite important conceptual differences concerning relationships among theories, analytical procedures, research methods, and creative practices. Recent multidisciplinary animation research, for example, retains identifiable contributions from animation and clinical expertise while coordinating them around a common communication problem, illustrating why the distinction from fully integrated interdisciplinary designs must remain explicit (Benvenuti et al., 2025).

The findings further indicate that operational classification provides a more reliable basis for methodological categorisation than author-defined terminology alone. By examining observable methodological characteristics reported in bibliographic metadata, the present review proposes a systematic approach capable of distinguishing parallel disciplinary contributions from genuine methodological integration, thereby improving conceptual consistency in future film research. The collaboration between animation specialists and clinicians described by Benvenuti et al. (2025) provides a useful example of disciplinary contributions that remain identifiable within a shared project.

Implications for Film Research Methodology

The methodological patterns identified throughout the reviewed corpus demonstrate that contemporary film studies is undergoing a progressive transformation toward increasingly integrated forms of research. Creative practice, audiovisual production, digital technologies, participatory methods, and interdisciplinary collaboration are no longer peripheral components

of film scholarship but have become central methodological strategies across diverse research contexts (Andrews et al., 2024; Harder et al., 2026; Heath & Richardson, 2026).

The principal methodological contribution of this review lies in the development of an operational classification framework capable of distinguishing multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary inquiry using observable methodological characteristics extracted from bibliographic metadata. Unlike classifications that rely primarily on disciplinary labels, the proposed framework considers relationships among research problems, theoretical integration, methodological design, stakeholder participation, creative practice, and knowledge production. This operational perspective offers a more transparent basis for methodological reporting and facilitates comparison across different forms of film scholarship.

Beyond its theoretical contribution, the proposed framework also has practical implications for film education, practice-based research, research-creation, and creative industries. Clear methodological distinctions may assist researchers, educators, and postgraduate students in selecting research designs appropriate to their research objectives while supporting curriculum development that increasingly integrates analytical inquiry with creative production. The framework may also contribute to more consistent reporting of collaborative film research involving academic institutions, creative practitioners, cultural organisations, and local communities (Cook et al., 2025; Heath & Richardson, 2026; Pauhrizi et al., 2025). Multidisciplinary animation projects further demonstrate how clearer methodological reporting can make the roles of creative and specialist collaborators more visible (Benvenuti et al., 2025).

Overall, the review demonstrates that methodological integration has become a defining characteristic of contemporary film studies. Greater conceptual consistency in distinguishing multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary inquiry is therefore expected to strengthen methodological transparency, improve future evidence synthesis, and support the continued development of film and audiovisual research (Gansing, 2022; Mesías, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Contemporary film studies demonstrate a clear methodological preference for interdisciplinary inquiry, reflecting the increasing complexity of research questions addressed across screen production, audiovisual culture, documentary practice, creative research, and digital media. Methodological classification of 202 Scopus-indexed publications identified interdisciplinary research as the dominant approach, whereas transdisciplinary research remained concentrated within participatory and community-oriented projects. Multidisciplinary research appeared only occasionally because disciplinary perspectives were generally integrated throughout the research process rather than maintained as parallel contributions.

Operational distinctions developed through the review provide a practical basis for differentiating multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary research in film studies. Classification depends on relationships among research problems, theoretical integration, methodological design, stakeholder participation, and knowledge production instead of disciplinary labels alone. Greater conceptual consistency may improve methodological reporting, strengthen comparative reviews, and support more transparent research design across film and audiovisual scholarship.

Reliance on bibliographic metadata defines the scope of the proposed framework. Titles, abstracts, author keywords, DOI information, and journal metadata support large-scale methodological mapping but cannot fully represent procedural decisions described in complete

publications. Future reviews incorporating full-text analysis, additional bibliographic databases, and citation-network analysis would strengthen methodological validation and broaden the applicability of the proposed classification framework across emerging areas of film and media research.

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