

The Research Process

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Purpose of This Document

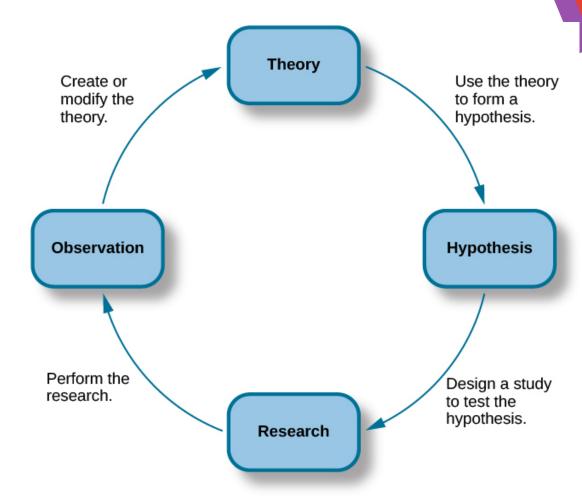
Familiarity with Research Process
Tools to begin Inquiry

What is Inquiry?

Reality (In all its complexity) **Hypotheses** Theory (As derived from the (created by theory) psychologists) Applications; Recommendations (How to support and Data enhance motivation & (To test the emotion in applied adequacy of settings) each hypothesis)

Systematic and Organized endeavor into an area of life or experience





"Scientific" Inquiry



Methods of Inquiry: Qualitative vs. Quantitative

Qualitative versus Quantitative

Purpose

Quali: To understand & interpret social interactions.

Quanti: To test hypotheses, look at cause & effect, & make predictions.

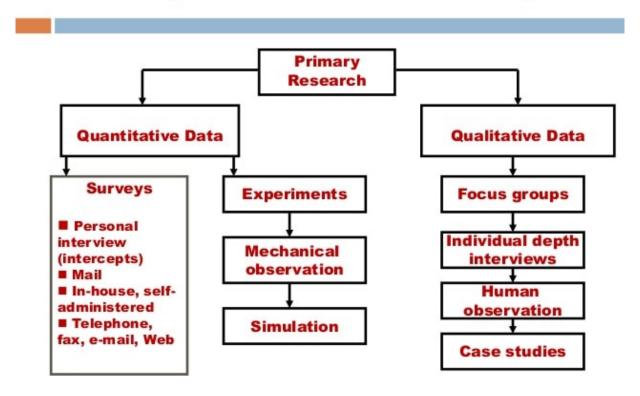
	Qualitative	Quantitative	
Conceptual	Concerned with understanding human behaviour from the informant's perspective	Concerned with discovering facts about social phenomena	
	Assumes a dynamic and negotiated reality	Assumes a fixed and measurable reality	
Methodological	Data are collected through participant observation and interviews	Data are collected through measuring things	
	Data are analysed by themes from descriptions by informants	Data are analysed through numerical comparisons and statistical inferences	
	Data are reported in the language of the informant	Data are reported through statistical analyses	



Research Cycle



Primary Research Methods & Techniques





What is a Research Question?

• An idea that drives further research

Qualitative RQ	Quantitative RQ	
How do aboriginal people experience waste removal and sanitation?	What have been the trends of waste removal rates from aboriginal communities?	



Research Methods



Methodology	Qualitative or Quantitative?	Typical Cost	Typical Time	Comments
Secondary Research	Can be either	Typically free or low cost	Short	Usually a great place to start, but often not detailed or specific enough
Surveys	Quantitative	Varies widely. Key costs include participant incentives, survey design, & survey administration	Medium	Excellent for measuring attitudes across a large population and for answering specific questions
Focus Groups	Qualitative	Medium. Key costs include focus group moderation and participant incentives	Medium	Good for exploratory research
Interviews	Qualitative	Similar to focus groups, but can be much cheaper depending on the audience and # of interviews	Short-Medium	Also good for exploratory research, along with deep dives into specific topics
Experiments &Field Trials	Quantitative	Often the most expensive method	Usually Long	Used for scientifically testing specific hypotheses
Observation	Usually Qualitative	Medium, relative to the other options	Medium	Good for measuring actual behavior, as opposed to self- reported behavior



Qualitative Research Methods

Phenome nology

Purpose:

Describing individual(s)' experience of phenomena

Disciplinary Origin: Philosophy

Data Collection & Analysis:

Interview data searched for significant statements that capture essence of participants' perceptions and experiences.

Research Report:

Rich narrative allowing readers to vicariously experience phenomenon through eyes of participants

Ethnography

Purpose:

Describing cultural characteristics of a group of people

Disciplinary Origin: Anthropology

Data Collection & Analysis:

Extended fieldwork on participant and nonparticipant observations, interviews; documents analyzed during/after study to gain insider's perspective on people and interactions

Research Report:

Extensive description of the physical and social settings aimed at holistic understanding.

Narrative Inquiry

Purpose:

Describing people's lives/stories to add to our understanding

Disciplinary Origin:

Human storytelling & education

Data Collection & Analysis:

Extensive description of the physical and social settings aimed at holistic understanding

Research Report:

Narrative account including patterns, connections, and insights uncovered and carefully synthesized.

Case Study

Purpose:

Addressing research questions through indepth analysis

Disciplinary Origin: Multi-disciplinary

Data Collection & Analysis:

Multiple methods and data sources are used to answer specific questions about one or more cases

Research Report:

Holistic narrative which triangulates data and places the case into a meaningful context.

Grounded Theory

Purpose:

Inductively generating a theory describing a phenomenon

Disciplinary Origin: Sociology

Data Collection & Analysis:

Continual activity running concurrent to analysis as interview and observational data are distilled (or coded) and compared to build a working theory grounded in collected data.

Research Report:

Contains methodological description, then proposes and discusses grounded theory built during research study.

Research Writing

Why Write?

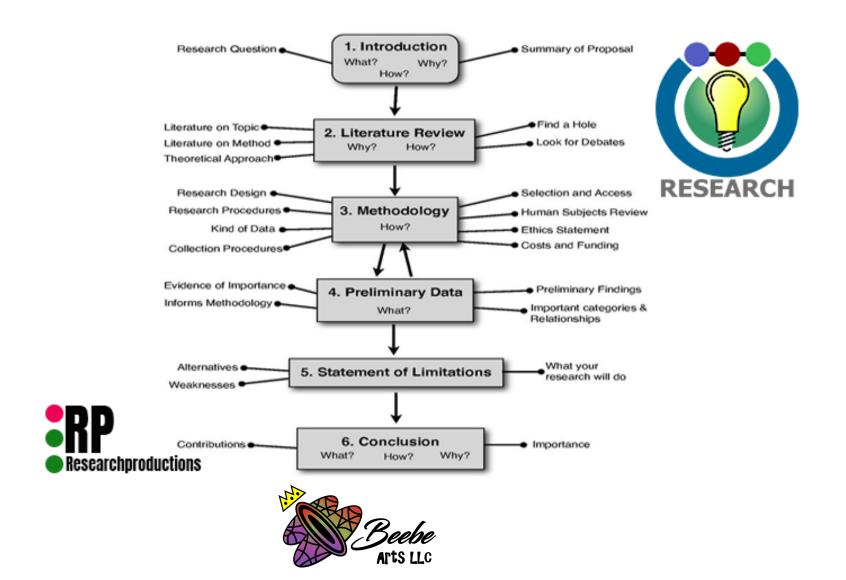
- Share methods
- Share findings
- Build on existing research
- Inform policy

Ways/Places to publish

- Scholarly, Peer-Reviewed Journals
- Open Source, Peer-Reviewed Journals
- Magazines, Blogs
- Posters, Presentations
- Events

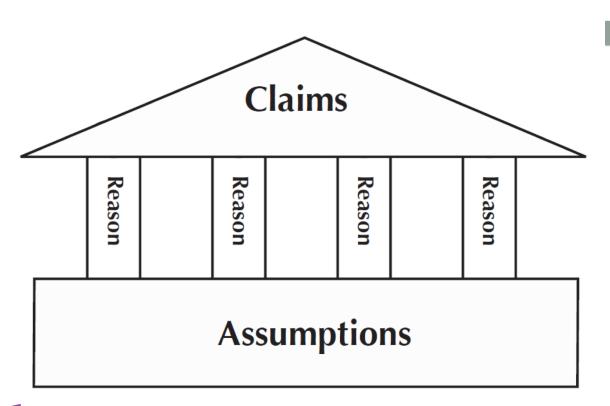


The writing process



How to write about research

Figure 2. Constructing an argument



What is an Argument?

- An argument is a claim with reasons that are supported by evidence.
- Think of it as a Formula:
 ARGUMENT = CLAIM + REASONS + SUPPORTING
 EVIDENCE
- An argument is different than an opinion because it is always supported by evidence and not just reasons.





Sources

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