

Conducting Research

How you conduct research depends upon the topic you are researching. Different topics will require accessing different types of materials.

KEY POINTS

- Some arguments will require presenting quantitative data to support claims, while other arguments will require making theoretical distinctions to support claims. The topic you choose to write on will determine how you conduct research and what types of sources you will need to access.
- Applied research is used to solve practical problems. Rather than exploring a wide body of knowledge, applied research looks for information that will indicate how feasible a solution might be.
- Quantitative research is used to measure quantities or amounts, then to track those amounts against earlier data to try and predict what that quantity will become in the future.
- Qualitative research involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting data about what people do and say. It relies on observation rather than strict measurement.

TERMS

- [Qualitative research](#)
Qualitative research is a method of inquiry employed in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social sciences, but also in market research and further contexts. Qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior.
- [quantitative research](#)
The systematic scientific investigation of quantitative properties and phenomena and their relationships, using statistical methods.
- [applied research](#)
Applied research is a form of systematic inquiry involving the practical application of science. It accesses and uses some part of the research communities' (the academy's) accumulated theories, knowledge, methods, and techniques for a specific, often state-, business-, or client- driven purpose.

EXAMPLES

- If you're continuing your paper on 19th century scientific theories of life and Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein, you will likely want to use books, essays, and possibly periodicals.
- If you are starting a new paper whose topic is manufacturing changes in the United States from the 1960s to 1980s, you will likely want to use books, essays, periodicals, government sources, and possibly photographic essays.

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Basic research is meant to increase your general knowledge about a subject. Sometimes, though, you have a more specific goal that requires special research practices. Before you begin researching, think about the kind of data you need and which methodology would be most useful in gathering it. The three methodologies most commonly used are applied, quantitative, and qualitative research.

Applied Research

Applied research is used to solve practical problems. Rather than exploring a wide body of knowledge, applied research looks for information that will indicate how feasible a solution might be. It focuses on analysis and solving social and real life problems.

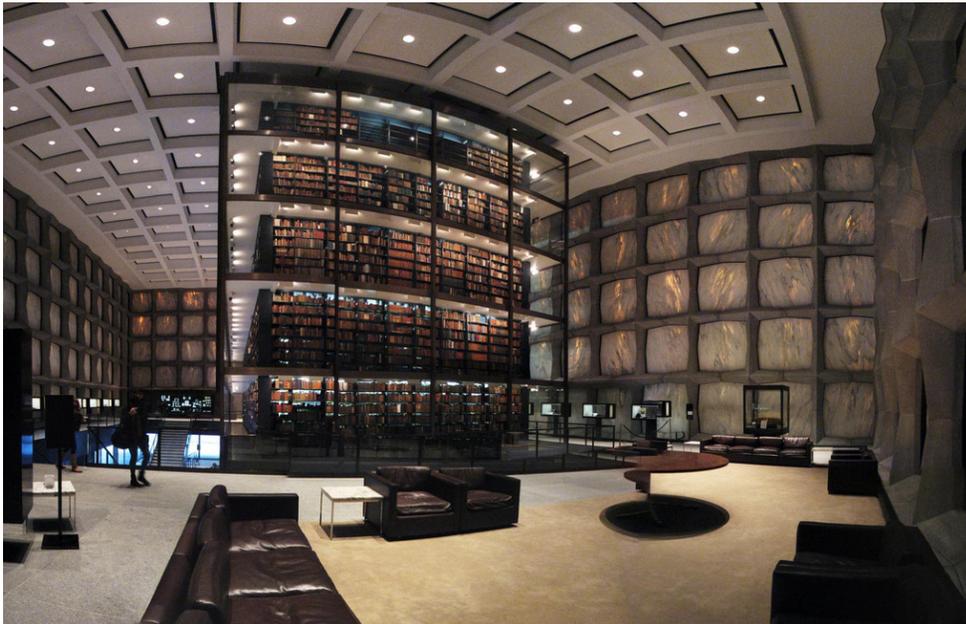
Quantitative Research

Quantitative research is used to measure quantities or amounts, then to track those amounts against earlier data to try and predict what that quantity will become in the future. It relies heavily on measurements, numerical data, and mathematical models-- particularly those found in statistics.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data about what people do and say. It relies on observation rather than strict measurement. Given its subject matter, it can be more subjective and open-ended than other types of research. Methods of conducting qualitative research include conducting interviews and observing different social scenarios.

The better you understand your subject matter and the goal of your paper, the more equipped you will be to begin researching using one of the above listed methodologies. Researching with the most appropriate methodology will allow you to collect information that is highly applicable to your topic.



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