

# 2

## BUILD A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR YOUR STUDY BASED ON PAST RESEARCH

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Distinguish types of sources by author, purpose, content, and utility.
- Apply strategies for identifying and finding past research.
- Evaluate primary research articles.
- Format citations and references in APA style.
- Formulate a big picture of how to build on past research.

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

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Chapter 2 focuses on finding and evaluating past research on a topic. The chapter is designed to help you discern different sources, including the difference between primary and secondary sources, the difference between scholarly and popular sources, and the various types of scholarly work that you might find in an academic journal (i.e., primary research articles, literature reviews, and commentaries) as well as other scholarly sources (conference papers and posters, unpublished manuscripts, books, theses and dissertations, etc.). You also learn the various ways to search for relevant research.

How to read and evaluate primary research articles is another major focus of this chapter. The key sections of a primary research article are outlined, and their purpose discussed. An article on the topic of academic achievement is used to illustrate the different parts of a research article, and finding and referring to this article will greatly enhance your understanding of key concepts. Specific guidelines for citing and referencing sources are provided. The chapter ends with a discussion of building on past research and some specific strategies for doing so.

## CHAPTER 2 QUIZ

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**Test your knowledge of the key terms from the chapter.**

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ may have been written by an expert or by a layperson and is designed to educate or entertain.
  - a. scholarly source
  - b. popular source
  - c. meta-analysis
  - d. primary research article
2. Which of the following is considered a scholarly source?
  - a. articles published in academic journals
  - b. articles published in newspapers
  - c. textbooks
  - d. educational pamphlets
3. Which of the following is considered a primary research source?
  - a. any article in an academic journal
  - b. textbooks
  - c. reports of original research
  - d. literature reviews
4. A review of past research would be found in
  - a. a meta-analysis.
  - b. a literature review.
  - c. a primary research article.
  - d. All of the above
5. A review of past research without a report of new, original research is always a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. secondary research source
  - b. primary research source
  - c. popular source
  - d. scholarly source
6. When researchers collect and report on new data, those data are
  - a. primary data.
  - b. secondary data.
  - c. either a or b.
  - d. none of these.
7. A primary research source analyzes \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. primary data
  - b. secondary data
  - c. either a or b
  - d. none of these

8. The “peers” in the peer review process for journals are
  - a. researchers who work at the same institution as the author.
  - b. students or interns.
  - c. experts in the field of study.
  - d. anyone the authors ask to review their work.
9. What process is used to reduce the likelihood that results from a study were due only to chance?
  - a. peer review
  - b. statistical significance testing
  - c. power
  - d. external validity
10. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the generalizability of the results of a study.
  - a. Statistical significance
  - b. Power
  - c. External validity
  - d. Internal validity

### Quiz 2 Answer Key

1. b. 2. a. 3. c. 4. d. 5. a. 6. a. 7. c. 8. c. 9. b. 10. c.

## CHAPTER 2 EXERCISES

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Achieve the learning objectives of the chapter by reviewing and applying key concepts.

### Exercise 2.1: Types of Sources

*Learning Objective: Distinguish types of sources by author, purpose, content, and utility.*

#### Application

1. The comedian Aziz Ansari wrote a book called *Modern Romance*. In addition to sharing personal anecdotes, he reports results of interviews and focus groups that he and his research partner conducted.
  - a. Is this a popular or scholarly source?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Are the reports of interviews and focus groups a primary or secondary research source?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Paul Eastwick, PhD, and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis examining the role of physical attractiveness in dating preferences and actual dating behaviors. Their findings were published in 2014 in the academic journal *Psychological Bulletin*.
  - a. Is this a popular or scholarly source?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Is their article a primary or secondary research source?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. René Dailey, PhD, and colleagues conducted a study about on-again/off-again dating relationships. Their findings were published in 2020 in the academic journal *Personal Relationships*.
- a. Is this a popular or scholarly source?

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- b. Is their article a primary or secondary research source?

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4. “Better than you think: The impact of TV on your relationship” is an article on the website *luvze.com*. The author of the article, Gary Lewandowski, PhD, summarizes the results of two research studies (neither of which he conducted) and explains what the results mean to the average person.

- a. Is this a popular or scholarly source?

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- b. Is this article a primary or secondary research source?

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5. Use Figure 2.1 in the textbook to help you answer the following questions.

- a. Which of the sources from questions 1 to 4 above might you use to generate ideas for a research topic but not include in your written report?

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- b. Which of the sources from questions 1 to 4 above might you use to identify patterns and gaps in past research and to help you identify original research sources?

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- c. Which of the sources from questions 1 to 4 above represents the type of source that should make up the majority of your sources for a research project?

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6. Imagine you were using the online search engine Google (likely against your professor’s recommendations) and you came across a report of original research.

- a. How would you determine whether or not the source was a scholarly one?

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- b. Suppose that you determine the source is, in fact, scholarly. How else should you evaluate it to determine whether it is appropriate to use as a source for a research project?

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## Exercise 2.2: Strategies to Identify and Find Past Research

*Learning Objective: Apply strategies for identifying and finding past research.*

### Application A

Use the Database PsycINFO to answer these questions:

1. Do a search for the article titled “Income inequality and happiness: An inverted U-shaped curve.”
  - a. Who are the authors of this article? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. What is the publication year? \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Which journal published the article? \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. What is the volume number? \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Is this a primary or secondary research article? \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Find and download the pdf of the full article. As verification that you are able to do this, what is the last word in the text on page 2? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Conduct a search for *income inequality* limiting publication year to between 2015 and 2020. How many search results are there? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Conduct the same search as in question 2, but also limit the publication type to peer-reviewed journals. How many search results are there now? \_\_\_\_\_

### Application B

Go to the Directory of Open Access Journals (doaj.org)

1. Do a search for *income and happiness*. How many available articles are there?
  - a. Less than 150
  - b. 150 to 300
  - c. 300 to 450
  - d. over 450
2. Find the article titled “Is there a kink in the happiness literature” from the search results. Is this a primary or secondary research article? How do you know?
   
\_\_\_\_\_
   
\_\_\_\_\_
   
\_\_\_\_\_
   
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Find the article titled “The biometric antecedents to happiness” from the search results. Is this a primary or secondary research article? How do you know?
   
\_\_\_\_\_
   
\_\_\_\_\_
   
\_\_\_\_\_
   
\_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 2.3: Reading and Evaluating Primary Research Articles

*Learning Objective: Evaluate primary research articles.*

### Review

Complete the following table listing the key parts of a primary research article in order, and each section’s purpose. We have completed some of the table for you.

Parts of a Primary Research Article	Purpose
	Very briefly describes the study, typically includes key variables
	Identifies the researchers who conducted and wrote up the study
Abstract	
	Explains importance of topic, reviews past research and theory to build a rationale for the current study, and identifies hypotheses or research questions
Method	
	Lists all the sources cited in the paper

**Application**

Look at the example published article in Appendix B in the textbook.

1. What is the title of the article? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who are the authors? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is this a primary or secondary research source? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Can you tell from reading the abstract whether or not the authors conducted an experiment? Why or why not?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Summarize, in your own words, the key point of the first paragraph of the Introduction.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Summarize, in your own words, the key point of the second paragraph of the Introduction.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the purpose of the last paragraph in the Introduction?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. In your own words, summarize the method of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. In your own words, summarize the results of the study.

\_\_\_\_\_

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10. What is the first limitation noted by the authors? How might a future research study address that limitation?

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11. What questions does this study generate for you?

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### Exercise 2.4: Crediting Sources

*Learning Objective: Format citations and references in APA style.*

#### Application A

1. Look at the example published article in Appendix B in the textbook.
  - a. Imagine you were going to include this as a source for your own paper about how to reduce plagiarism. Write a sentence you would include in your paper, being sure that
    - \_\_the sentence accurately summarizes one or more finding from the study
    - \_\_the sentence is in your own words
    - \_\_you cite the correct source using APA format

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- b. Write an APA-style reference for the source you cited above. Use *cursive* or underline to indicate italics.

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2. Look at the articles you found for Exercise 2.2.
  - a. How would you cite these articles?

Article title	Narrative citation	Parenthetical citation
Income inequality and happiness: An inverted U-shaped curve		
Is there a kink in the happiness literature?		
The biometric antecedents to happiness		

- b. On a computer, type up an APA-style References section with these sources. Save your document and check with your professor on how to turn it in, if applicable.

**Application B**

1. Find and correct the five APA-format citation errors in the paragraph:

Many of us like to believe that “beauty comes from within” and that that inner beauty is more important than physical beauty. However, research suggests that physical attractiveness is the single most important factor that impacts our desire to date someone (Kurzban and Weeden, 2005; Li et al., 2013). An early cross cultural survey conducted by Buss & Schmitt found that across the world physical attractiveness of one’s partner was more important for men than it was for women (1993). A more recent meta-analysis found that gender differences only occur in ratings of ideal romantic partners and ratings of hypothetical targets. Both men and women generally find physical attractiveness equally important in actual face-to-face interactions (Eastwick, Luchies, Finkel & Hunt, 2014). Moreover, although we might all desire an attractive partner, we tend to wind up with someone who matches our level of physical attractiveness (Miller, R. S., 2012). Thus, our stated preferences do not fully predict our actual dating behaviors (Eastwick et al., 2014).

2. Find and correct the five APA-format errors in the references.

**References**

- Miller, R. S. (2012). *Intimate relationships* (7th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Buss, D. M., and Schmitt, D. P. (1993). Sexual strategies theory: An evolutionary perspective on human mating. *Psychological Review*, *100*(2), 204–232. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.100.2.204>
- Eastwick, P. W., Luchies, L. B., Finkel, E. J., & Hunt, L. L. (2014). The predictive validity of ideal partner preferences: A review and meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, *140*(3), 623–665. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032432>
- Kurzban, R., & Weeden, J. (2005). HurryDate: Mate Preferences in Action. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, *26*(3), 227-244. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2004.08.012>
- Li, N. P., Yong, J. C., Tov, W., Sng, O., Fletcher, G. J. O., Valentine, K. A., Jiang, Y.F., Balliet, D. (2013). Mate preferences do predict attraction and choices in the early stages of mate selection. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *105*(5), 757–776. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033777>

**Exercise 2.5: The Big Picture: Use the Past to Inform the Present**

*Learning Objective: Formulate a big picture of how to build on past research.*

**Review:** List the four ways you might build on past research.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Check with your professor for answers to the chapter exercises.**

Apply what you have learned to your own research by completing the “Your Research” exercises.



## Your Research

### Find Research on Your Topic

1. What database is most commonly used in your discipline?

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2. Using that database, conduct a search for relevant and recent research articles on your topic. Remember to try out different keywords and consider searching by author or looking at the references of key articles.

Doing this search will help you identify appropriate articles as well as help you refine and revise your research topic. It should take several hours if you do it correctly!

Identify a few of the most relevant and interesting articles. Find the full text of these articles.

### Read, Evaluate, and Reference a Primary Research Article on Your Topic

1. Identify and find the full text of a primary research article on your topic, or revised topic, that you might model (in other words, you might use a similar method).
2. Answer the following based on the article, using your own words (do not copy sentences or phrases directly from the article). Practice APA formatting by citing the article in each of your answers.

- a. Briefly, what is the rationale for the study? (Hint: Look in the Introduction.)

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- b. Identify one hypothesis from the article that most interests you. (Hint: Hypotheses are usually toward the end of the Introduction section.)

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- c. Did the results support the hypothesis you identified? Explain.

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3. Write an APA-style reference for the article. Use cursive or underline to indicate italics.

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4. Consider how to build on the study:

- a. Identify one suggestion for future research that the author(s) identified in the Discussion section of the article and that you think you might be able to do.

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- b. Review Exercise 2.5. Which one of the four ways to build on past research does your answer to question 4a best fit under?

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