

Bridge: A MindSport For All

Doing research

Community research training #1



What is research?

- Research is the purposeful **collection of data** that is useful to describing or explaining different aspects of the world
- We start with a **research goal**: “I want to know more about... (e.g. why do people like coffee so much?)”
- We then choose a **research method** (e.g. a survey or some interviews) and go about finding out more



What is research?



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After we analyse our data, we now have our findings, and we end up with something like this...

1. Coffee is **a stimulant**: it makes people more energetic and productive
2. There is **a coffee-drinking culture** in many countries around the world: coffee barely needs any marketing!
3. Cafes are **important communal spaces** and people want to be part of the coffee-drinking community



We have successfully answered our question and understood what is so special about coffee!

Research is not just for people in white lab coats...

- You have probably used your **research skills** to:
 - Choose your next holiday destination
 - Compare prices and services online
 - Find the best way to learn a new language
 - Find a good movie to watch

You already know how to do research
(for the most part)!



The scientific method

1. **Observe** the natural (and social) world
2. **Question** why things are the way they are
3. **Gather data** and answer your research question
4. Be willing to consider **new evidence** (things do not stay the same)
5. Minimise **assumptions**
6. Change what you thought you knew to be true



Types of research



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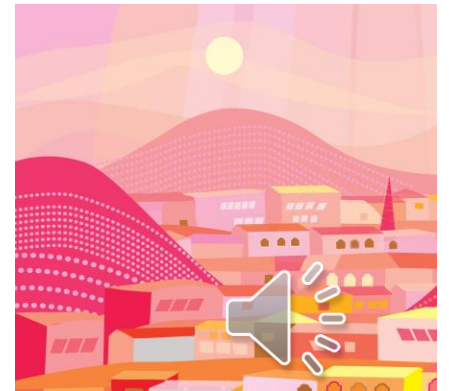
Quantitative

- 20% of people bought ice cream today
- **Numbers, percentages**

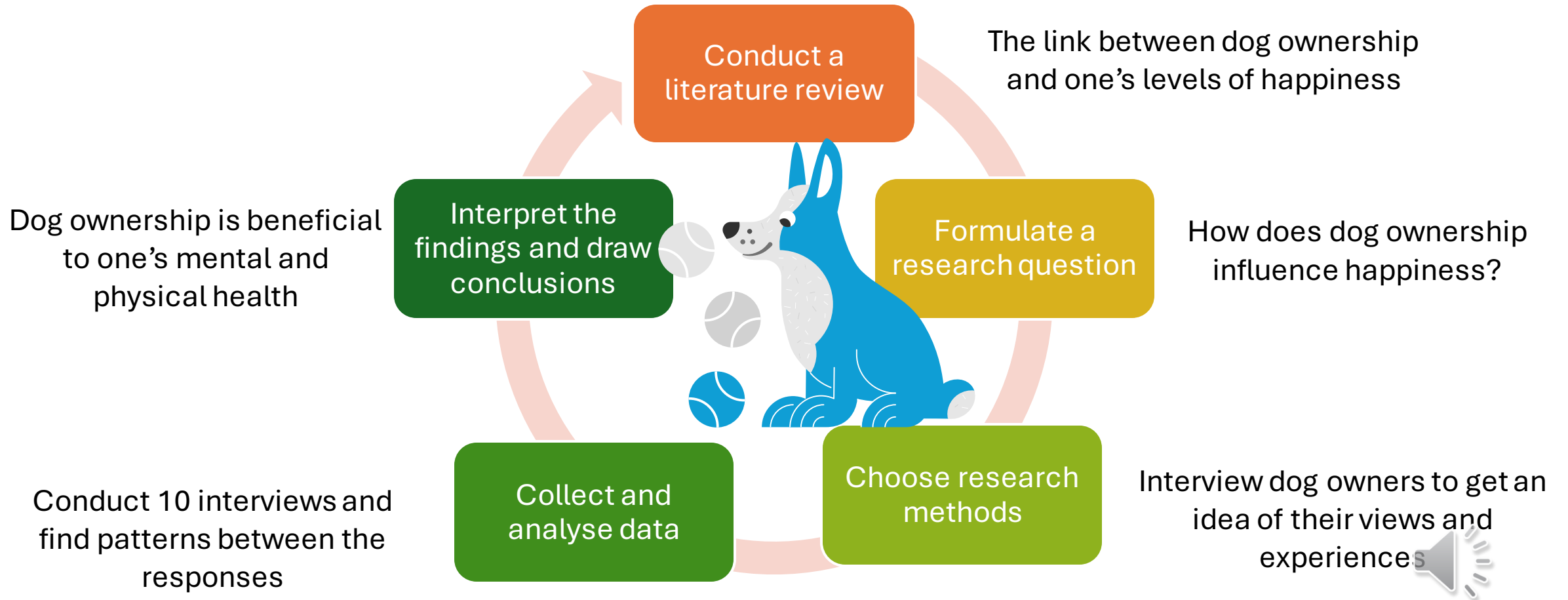


Qualitative

- “I bought the ice cream because it was a hot day”
- **What, where, how, why?**



The research process



Key concepts



Research participants

The **people** who take part in our research




Research data

The **information** we gather from our participants



Research findings

The **patterns** we identify across the information we have collected 

Doing research well



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Good research follows a systematic approach.

- **Similar questions** are posed to the participants to allow for comparison.

Researchers need to practice ethics and follow a code of conduct.

- Participants are asked to **consent** to take part in the research, and the purposes of the research are explained to them.

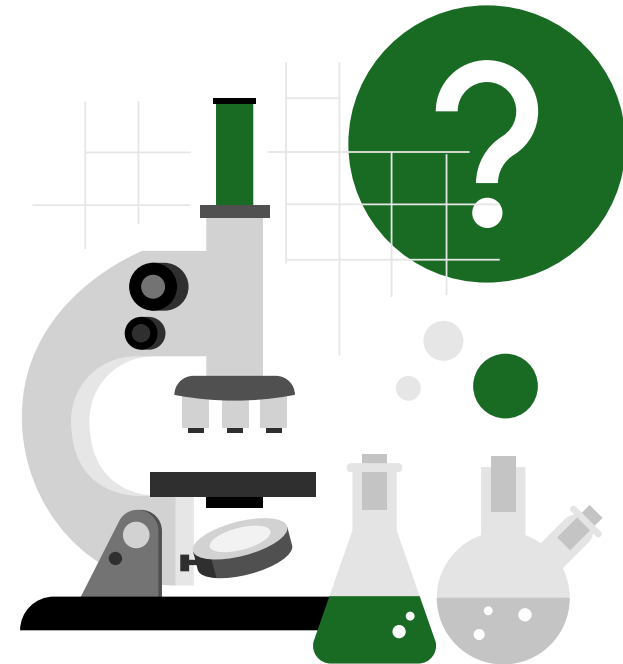
Accuracy is one of the most critical aspects of research.

- Real-time data and knowledge is derived from **real-world settings**.



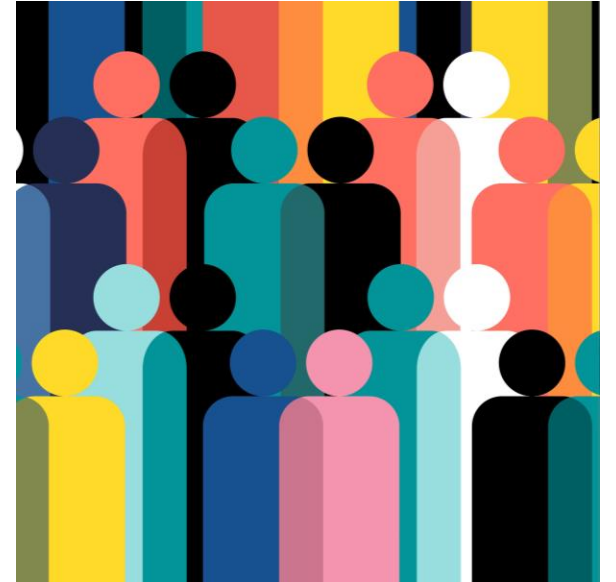
Why do we do research?

- To **expand our understanding** of our area of interest
- To get an **up-to-date snapshot** of how things are
- To generate **positive impact** and bring about change



Community research

- By carrying out their own research, community researchers **create positive change in their own community.**
- Community researchers have **first-hand experience** of the research setting that researchers may lack.
- Community researchers have **insider knowledge and relationships** that help them bring unique perspectives to the research.



Some examples...



- The **Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT)** was launched at the University of Stirling in 2006.
- It was aimed at **bridging the gap** between research findings and conservation practice.
- The research showed that bumblebees thrive on **islands**.
- BBCT has involved **>12,000 people** in bumblebee recording and conservation.
- Members of the public helped the research by becoming **BeeWalkers**.

Help us to **count** the UK's bumblebees by becoming a **BeeWalker**

Bumblebees are declining across the UK and to better understand the reasons why, and what we can do to help, we need data – lots of data – on where we can find the remaining bumblebees, how many there are, and what they're doing.



828

Active BeeWalkers



300k

Individual bees counted in 2023



937

BeeWalk transects across the UK

Some examples...

- Through the **History Tomorrow** initiative, researchers at the University of Stirling designed a research project to restore property of the past to communities.
- Community volunteers were trained and empowered to undertake **their own research into public history**.
- The research **enhanced local awareness** about areas of historic and cultural significance and informed community participation in local planning debates.
- **22 different community projects** were funded through a £2M grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund

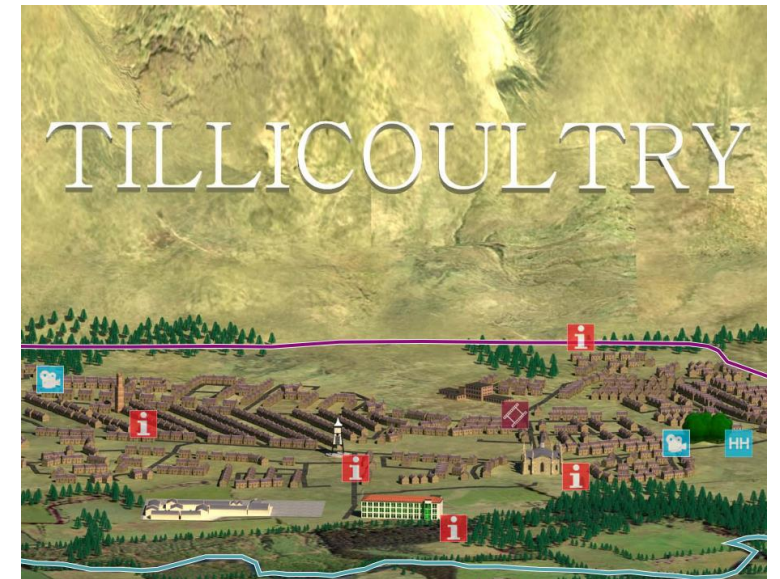


Image courtesy of <https://ochils.org.uk/oiip/index.html>

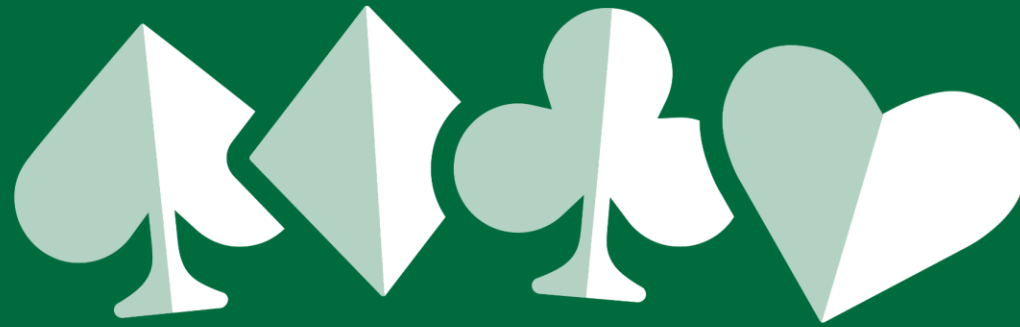


New community research project: Bridging schools



- The “**Bridging schools**” research projects aims to encourage more young people to learn and play bridge.
- According to an [international survey of over 14000 bridge players](#), only **1.5%** of all bridge players are between the ages of 13 and 24.
- The goal of the project is to develop bottom-up solutions to **promoting bridge in schools**.
- It is anticipated that the research and outreach activities will lead to a significant **increase in the number of young bridge players** globally.





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