How to Prepare for Your First Research Project

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Outline

- What is a research project?

- Literature review

  - Finding literature

  - A brief review of BGSU library website

  - Searching BGSU catalog

  - Finding articles

  - Using Google Scholars

- Finding data from ICPSR

  - What is ICPSR?

  - A brief overview of ICPSR website

  - Set up MyData account

  - How to find ICPSR data

  - How to search data-related literature

  - How to find measures of variables

  - How to analyze data online

- Conclusion
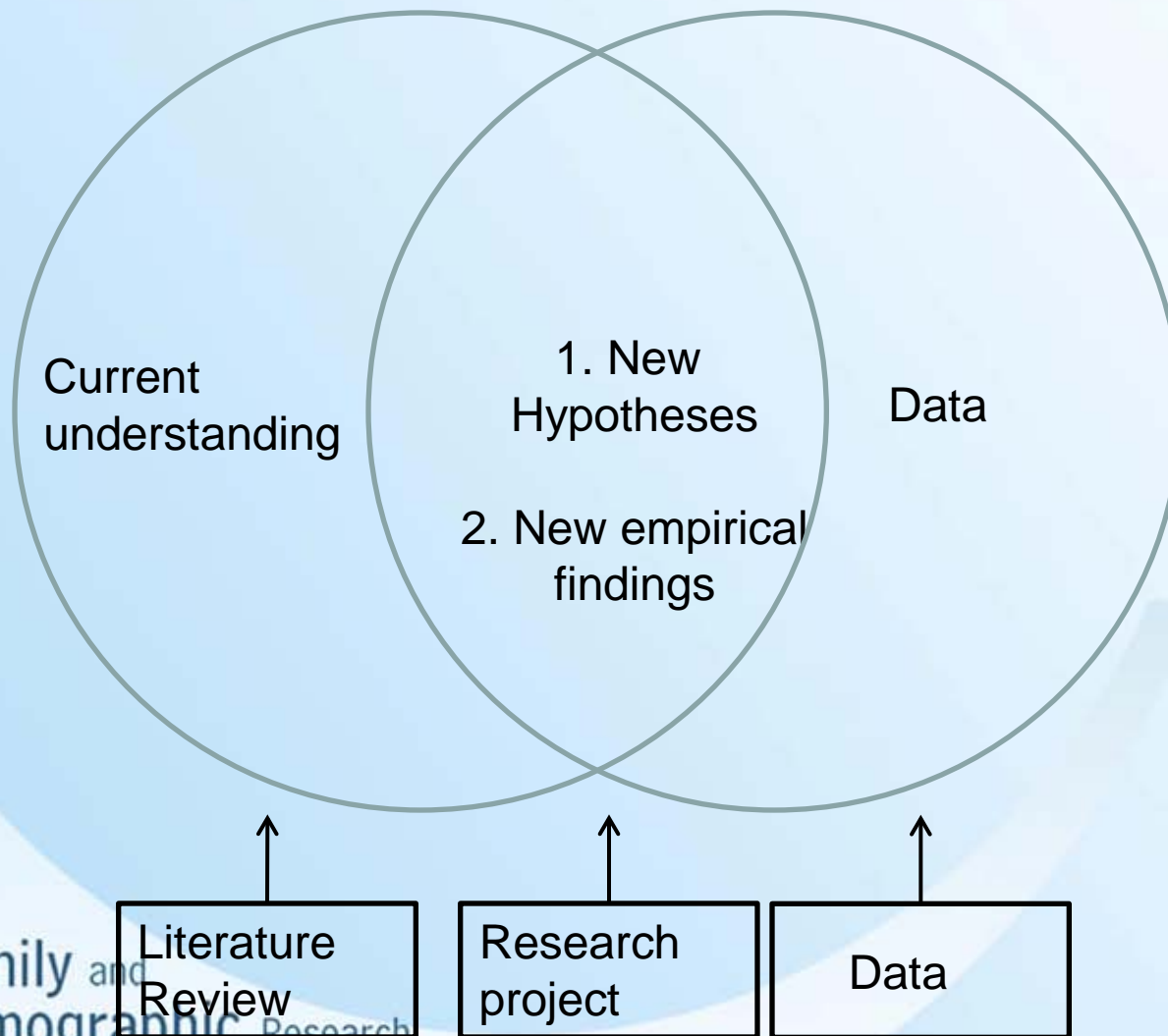
2

What is a research project?

A study that enhances new understandings of a social phenomenon for sociologists

Key components:

– A social phenomenon

– Enhancing new understandings of the phenomenon

- What is the current understanding of this phenomenon in terms of its changes, causes, consequences.

- What new insights you would like to add to this phenomenon.

– Sociologists

Relations between Literature Review and Data

Current understanding

1. New Hypotheses

2. New empirical findings

Data

Literature Review

Research project

Data

Literature Review

Two sources of finding literature

– Class materials

– Library research
   (http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/index.html)

Class Materials

- Text books
- Journal papers
- References in the books and journal papers

A Brief Review of BGSU Library Website

- Set up the library Account
- Several ways to conduct literature search
  - Searching BGSU catalog
  - Finding articles
  - Using Google Scholars

Searching BGSU Catalog

- Use "Keyword", "Author" "Title" and "Subject" to search for books and articles
- Use OhioLINK
- Use WorldCat
- Use Electronic Book Center
- Use More E-Books

Finding Articles

- Relations between articles and databases
- Two default databases: EBSCO Academic Search Complete and the OhioLINK Electronic Journal Center (EJC)
- Finding articles within a particular data base
- Finding articles in a particular E-journal

Using Google Scholars

- Use the keyword to search for articles
- Google scholars provides information on whether the articles are accessible electronically

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Finding data from ICPSR

The Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) is an international consortium of about 700 academic institutions and research organizations:

- Maintain an archive of more than 500,000 data files in political and social sciences

- Provide summer courses for researchers interested in learning issues of analyzing the data files, such as research design, statistics, data analysis, and social methodology

- Fund research on the emerging challenges of digital curation and data science

A Brief Overview of ICPSR Website

- Announcements
- Featured sites
- Nine Tabs:
  - Home
  - Find & Analyze Data
  - About ICPSR
  - Deposit Data & Findings
  - Digital Curation
  - Membership
  - Partners & Projects
  - Teaching & Learning
  - Help
- MyData login/create account
- Search box

Set Up MyData Account

- Click on "MyData Login/Create Account"
- Click on "Create A New Account"
- Fill in all the information and click on "submit"
- A webpage shows "Account Information"
- You can now log on to the account

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13

How to Find ICPSR Data

Click "Find & Analyze Data" → "Find ICPSR Data"

- Search data by using keywords
- Browse data:
  - View all studies
  - View all studies for which online analysis is available
  - Browse by topic
  - Browse by geography (interactive map)
  - Browse by investigator
  - Browse by series
  - Browse recent updates & additions (last 90 days)

How to Search Data-related Literature

Click "Find & Analyze Data" → "Bibliography of Data-Related Literature"

- Search literature by using keywords
- Browse literature:
    - View all citations
    - Browse by author
    - Browse by journal

How to Find Measures of Variables

Click "Find & Analyze Data" → "Variables Database"

- Search variables by using keywords
- Browse variables:

–List all studies in the variables database

–List all series in the variables database

–Advanced search

How to Analyze Data Online

- Click "Find & Analyze Data" → "Analyze data online"
- Search for data with Survey Documentation Analysis (SDA)
- Browse 612 data with SDA

Conclusions

- Doing research requires you to review past literature and using empirical data in order to bring new understanding to a social phenomenon.

- You use class materials and library services to find books or articles.

- You use ICPSR to find data

- To better use BGSU libraries, you could look at the "Tutorials & Tools" on the library webpage.

- To better use ICPSR, you could look at the "help" section of the ICPSR website.

- For additional help with using ICPSR website, feel free to contact me at wuh@bgsu.edu and 372-3119.