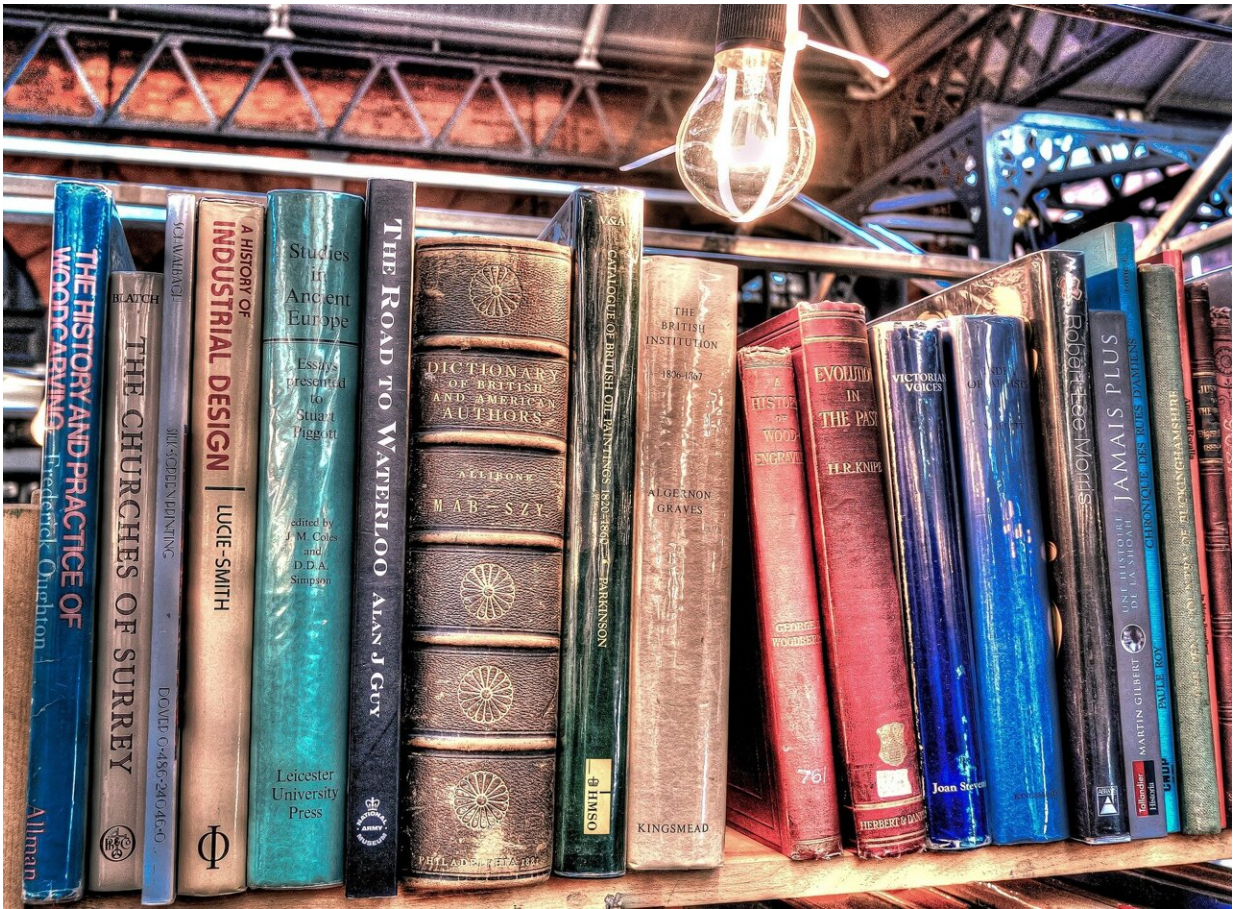


Is the nature of academic research changing?

September 9 2021



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An analysis in *Learned Publishing* indicates that the number of academic research articles using surveys and questionnaires has dramatically risen in the past 20 years; however, the quality of some of these articles (and

therefore the research) may be in doubt.

The proportion of journal articles mentioning questionnaires tripled between 1996 and 2019, indicating a greater attention on human opinions, self-reports, and knowledge. An increase was seen in all fields examined.

Over the same period, the citation impact—a measure of how many times an [article](#) is cited by other articles or books—of [questionnaire](#)-based research declined.

"An increasing use of questionnaires probably reflects greater academic concern with human issues and perspectives, which must be good for society," said corresponding author Mike Thelwall, Ph.D., of the University of Wolverhampton, in the UK. "I hope that this means that we are now considering a wider range of perspectives, both internationally and within [individual countries](#)."

More information: Ruth Fairclough et al, Questionnaires mentioned in academic research 1996–2019: Rapid increase but declining citation impact, *Learned Publishing* (2021). [DOI: 10.1002/leap.1417](https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1417)

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