

Chapter 2—Doing Sociology: Research Methods

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. A variable is:
 - a. anything that can change.
 - b. a testable statement about the relationship between two or more hypotheses.
 - c. a factor that always remains constant.
 - d. a statement of association.
 - e. a fact given a definition in a research process.

ANS: A

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.3

MSC: Factual

2. When two variables are related but one does **not** cause the other, researchers term the situation:
 - a. a validity.
 - b. an association.
 - c. a bias.
 - d. a reliability.
 - e. an establishment.

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

3. Which of the following is a statement of causality?
 - a. Rural areas have fewer services than urban areas.
 - b. This sociology course is difficult.
 - c. Poverty produces low self-esteem.
 - d. Mean income in New York is higher than mean income in Florida.
 - e. On average, more persons are murdered in Texas than Arizona.

ANS: C

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.1

MSC: Conceptual

4. "Cigarette smoking has been shown to be related to lung disease." This proposition includes:
 - a. a statement of bias against smoking.
 - b. a statement of association.
 - c. no independent variable.
 - d. all of the above
 - e. none of the above

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.1

MSC: Conceptual

5. On average, the taller a person is, the more she or he is likely to weigh. The evidence for this statement would most likely be:
 - a. a statement causality.
 - b. random insight.
 - c. an examination of the first ten persons walking into a classroom in a non-biased way.
 - d. a statement of association.
 - e. a firm biological relationship.

ANS: D

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.1

MSC: Applied

6. "Social class background is a good predictor of achievement in school." In this statement, achievement in school is the:
- independent variable.
 - dependent variable.
 - significant variable.
 - control variable.

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.3

MSC: Applied

7. "Men who live in cities are more likely to marry young than men who live in the country." In this hypothesis, the dependent variable is the:
- place of residence (city or country).
 - marital status (single or married).
 - age at marriage.
 - sex.
 - There is no dependent variable in this example.

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.3

MSC: Applied

8. In a recent national survey, it was learned that the grade point average of college seniors was correlated with their class attendance. In that study, the independent variable was:
- class attendance.
 - class rank, e.g., senior status.
 - grade point average.
 - the national survey.

ANS: A

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.3

MSC: Applied

9. Using a structured interview:
- might allow useful information to be ignored or lost.
 - guarantees that useful information will not be lost.
 - guarantees that researchers' bias will not affect the study.
 - provides results that are valid.
 - provides the only true method of achieving reliability.

ANS: A

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Applied

10. In what type of interview does the investigator ask a list of questions, but is free to vary them or make up new questions on topics that take on importance during the course of the interview?
- a structured interview
 - an open-ended interview
 - an invalid experiment
 - a participant observation
 - subject to interviewer bias

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Applied

11. A major drawback of open-ended interviews is that:
- some interviews may not cover topics important to the research project.

- b. information obtained will be somewhat different for each subject, and therefore unreliable.
- c. researchers continuously have to make up new questions.
- d. analysis of the information is a complex and time-consuming process.
- e. respondents do not like open-ended interviews.

ANS: D

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Conceptual

12. Riding in unmarked police cars to collect data on drug dealers is using:

- a. a longitudinal survey.
- b. a laboratory experiment.
- c. participant observation.
- d. a semi-structured interview.
- e. secondary observation.

ANS: C

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Applied

13. In the early 1960s, sociologist Herbert Gans moved into a newly developed suburb in New Jersey where he lived for two years, observing and interviewing his neighbors. In research terms, Gans conducted a _____ study.

- a. documentary
- b. experimental
- c. survey
- d. participant observation
- e. secondary analysis

ANS: D

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

14. Sociologists utilizing the Census, the FBI statistics, or statistics from the Department of Labor would be engaged in which type of data collection method?

- a. participant observation
- b. survey research
- c. experiments
- d. secondary analysis

ANS: D

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

15. Bob grew up in the church, where he proposed to study ethics in church finance. He found it difficult to say anything negative or critical about the people who were part of his community, even when he discovered some financial manipulations by members of the congregation. Which of the following is a potential problem in this study?

- a. a high degree of subject object conflict
- b. unintentional bias created by the emotional attachment of the researcher to subjects
- c. a frequent inability to get at the subtleties and nuances of social interaction
- d. differences between generations in experience
- e. Selecting what to report as significant is normal, so there is no problem.

ANS: B

REF: Objectivity in Sociological Research

OBJ: 2.5

MSC: Applied

16. Which of the following research designs is **least** used by sociologists?

- a. survey research

- b. participant observation
- c. controlled experiment
- d. structured interview
- e. secondary analysis

ANS: C

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

17. The main **advantage** of experiments in social research is that:
- a. people tend to act more naturally in laboratory settings.
 - b. researchers have control over the variables of the study.
 - c. interactions of large groups can easily be studied.
 - d. it is the least expensive form of research design.
 - e. subjects respond most honestly.

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

18. In research, a **sample** is defined as:
- a. all the people who share a particular characteristic of research interest.
 - b. two or more people who share the same values.
 - c. the portion of the total population chosen for study.
 - d. the one case or person that best represents a particular social category.
 - e. a small group of volunteers for the study.

ANS: C

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.4

MSC: Factual

19. Failure to achieve a **representative** sample is known as:
- a. researcher bias.
 - b. sampling error.
 - c. subjectivity.
 - d. stratified sampling.
 - e. all of the above

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.4

MSC: Factual

20. People are selected from a group in such a way that every person has the same chance of being selected. The people who are selected make up what type of sample?
- a. representative
 - b. random
 - c. stratified
 - d. cross-sectional
 - e. unintentional

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.4

MSC: Conceptual

21. Select the appropriate group to create a stratified random sample of students at your school.
- a. 300 students selected at random
 - b. all the low-income students enrolled in the college
 - c. all racial and religious groups represented in proportion to their numbers at the college
 - d. every fifth student selected from an alphabetical listing of names
 - e. blind picking of students standing outside of a student union building

ANS: C REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.4
MSC: Applied

22. In a research study, investigators at one of the study sites are not told what is actually being tested, nor are they told who the research subjects are. This is an example of:
- double-blind technique.
 - random sampling.
 - poor research design.
 - biased research techniques.
 - a controlled experiment.

ANS: A REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.5
MSC: Conceptual

23. The use of **blind** or **double-blind** investigators in a study is done to avoid:
- sampling error.
 - sample bias.
 - uncontrollable variables.
 - researcher bias.
 - random error.

ANS: D REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.5
MSC: Factual

24. The midway point in a series of scores or figures resulting in half of the scores being above and half being below is called the:
- mean.
 - median.
 - mode.
 - meridian.
 - moderate.

ANS: B REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.6
MSC: Factual

25. Find the mode of the following quiz scores: 92, 84, 76, 92, 87, 100.
- 84
 - 87
 - 76
 - 92
 - 100

ANS: D REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.6
MSC: Applied

26. Find the mode of the following quiz scores: 45, 77, 65, 67, 51, 98, 51, 77, 79, 69, 86, 83, 77, 99, 98, 54, 68, 77, 93, 94, 72, 77.
- 68
 - 77
 - 68.5
 - 72
 - 79.4

ANS: B REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.6
MSC: Applied

27. Find the mean of the following quiz scores: 12, 24, 36, 47, 57, 100.

- a. 24
- b. 100
- c. 46
- d. 87
- e. 57

ANS: C

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.6

MSC: Applied

28. Find the median of the following quiz scores: 14, 5, 5, 4, 4, 18, 12, 7, 14, 10, 6.

- a. 5
- b. 7
- c. 10
- d. 14
- e. 18

ANS: A

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.6

MSC: Applied

29. This measure of central tendency is commonly referred to as the **average**.

- a. median
- b. mode
- c. mean
- d. mentor
- e. merit

ANS: C

REF: 39

OBJ: 2.6

MSC: Factual

30. Which measure of central tendency is most useful when there is a relatively narrow range of figures?

- a. median
- b. mode
- c. mean
- d. mentor
- e. merit

ANS: C

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.6

MSC: Conceptual

31. You are reading a statistical table. What part of that table would help you make a decision as to the reliability of the table's information?

- a. source
- b. title
- c. footnotes
- d. column and row labels
- e. publication date

ANS: A

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.7

MSC: Conceptual

32. Knowing the source of the information in a statistical table can help you:

- a. identify other references of the same data.
- b. determine if the data collection agent had a background in sociology.
- c. determine if the data has been previously used elsewhere.

- d. determine other ways to collect the same data.
- e. decide if the information is reliable.

ANS: E

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.7

MSC: Conceptual

33. What type of research did Emile Durkheim depend on in his classic study on suicide?
- a. primary research
 - b. public research
 - c. qualitative research
 - d. secondary research
 - e. Durkheim did analysis, not research.

ANS: D

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

34. _____ refers to consistency of results in research; _____ refers to the appropriateness of a measure to the phenomenon being studied.
- a. Reliability; validity
 - b. Validity; reliability
 - c. Representative; validity
 - d. Reliability; objectivity
 - e. Neutrality; validity

ANS: A

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

35. Validity refers to:
- a. the quality of consistency in measurement.
 - b. the extent to which the researcher measured what she had planned to measure.
 - c. the manner in which the researcher has operationalizing variables.
 - d. the sum of independent and dependent variables.
 - e. the lack of researcher bias which can be demonstrated statistically.

ANS: B

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

36. You just read a study which reports that marijuana use leads to heroin addiction. After a careful examination of the literature, you are unable to find any other researcher who has been able to duplicate these results. You may conclude that this study lacks:
- a. reliability.
 - b. representation.
 - c. cohesiveness.
 - d. validity.
 - e. legality.

ANS: A

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Applied

37. Max Weber argued that sociologists need to:
- a. become more personally involved in their research.
 - b. rely on their morals to decide which scientific findings should be accepted as true.
 - c. clearly state their personal values before beginning their research study.
 - d. refrain from including their personal values into the research process.
 - e. take on research for those social causes for which they are certain to help society's

powerless persons who have no other spokesperson.

ANS: D REF: Objectivity in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.5 MSC: Factual

38. You would like to do a study of household size among the population of the state of Illinois. Which type of study method would be appropriate?
- unstructured interviews
 - cross-sectional study
 - longitudinal study
 - scientific experiment
 - participant observation

ANS: B REF: The Research Process OBJ: 1.2
MSC: Applied

39. Objectivity requires a social researcher to:
- assume a completely neutral stance toward the issue under investigation.
 - recognize and attempt to control for bias.
 - manipulate the research subjects as if they were inanimate objects.
 - disguise any personal bias that they might have.
 - sign statements agreeing to remove all personal bias from their research.

ANS: B REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.9
MSC: Conceptual

40. You just proved a research hypothesis false. As a sociologist, how should you treat this?
- When a hypothesis is false, you should double check your sample for errors.
 - Hypothesis testing is flawed by nature, so you should try again until things fit.
 - False hypotheses are rare, so this finding is itself worth keeping.
 - Proving a hypothesis false helps to eliminate wrong answers and clarify research.
 - A hypothesis that is false in one sense may be true in another.

ANS: D REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Applied

41. Ethical considerations that must be part of a sociologist's research include:
- striving to protect the rights and privacy of participants.
 - promising anonymity to investigators.
 - ensuring that participants accept all findings.
 - ensuring that results will support the hypothesis.
 - promising to present all theoretical ideas on a subject.

ANS: A REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Factual

42. It is clear that a large survey is an appropriate method for a study of marriage patterns among college students. What will the researcher need to do to insure that the research sample is random?
- Ask as many people as possible.
 - Ask more than one group of people; try to get all the groups in.
 - Set up the experiment to include a control sample to test the research sample.
 - Distribute the surveys in a non-biased manner.
 - Make sure that everyone eligible to participate has an equal chance of being selected.

ANS: E REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.4
MSC: Applied

43. Social scientists regard deception of research participants as:
- a. unimportant unless the research participant protests.
 - b. only an issue if the participants are children.
 - c. a practice to avoid if at all possible.
 - d. nothing to worry about.
 - e. only an issue if the participants are senior citizens.

ANS: C REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Factual

44. A survey of employed women must include people of different ages. To make sure the results of such a survey are representative of all employed women in the society, you should use which of the following?
- a. a stratified sample
 - b. longitudinal data
 - c. interviews with union and non-union employees
 - d. a sample based on high school placement records
 - e. a pure random sample

ANS: A REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.4
MSC: Applied

45. Which of the following represents an **advantage** of social surveys?
- a. There is often a low response rate.
 - b. The laboratory setting creates an artificial social environment.
 - c. Findings are open to interpretation and can support researcher bias.
 - d. Data can be quantified and comparisons between groups can be made.
 - e. There is no likelihood of flawed data.

ANS: D REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Conceptual

46. A student decided to experiment with what happens when normal expectations are broken. He took some items from another person's basket and counted them on the floor. He then wrote down how the other person responded. What is the student's method of finding data?
- a. questionnaire distributed after the research act
 - b. observation
 - c. action research
 - d. scientific small experiment
 - e. controlled experiment

ANS: B REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Applied

47. Which of the following represents an **advantage** of participant observation research?
- a. Questionnaires can be used for large numbers of people.
 - b. It is easy to replicate.
 - c. Data can be quantified and comparisons made.
 - d. It allows people to be observed in their "natural" environments.
 - e. There is no likelihood of flawed data.

ANS: D REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Factual

48. Which of the following represents an **advantage** of a secondary analysis?
- Questionnaires can be used for large numbers of people.
 - The laboratory creates an artificial social environment.
 - It is time-consuming
 - It saves time and money.
 - There is no likelihood of flawed data.

ANS: D

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

49. Dr. Tom is doing research about the vampire in American society. What is the first problem he must solve before he selects a research design method?
- People have such strong reactions to vampires that an objective index will be hard to write.
 - Vampires do not exist, so how can this be an empirical study?
 - Can a big enough selection of cases related to vampires be identified for research?
 - How many variables are related to vampires?
 - What is the operational definition of a vampire in this research?

ANS: E

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.1

MSC: Applied

50. Searching for the definition of love by comparing cultural definitions helps to:
- prevent people from giving false information or the wrong answer.
 - point the way to the proper sample of lovers for study.
 - create multiple categories of definitions of the term love that can fit in one study.
 - call into question whether love actually exists.
 - establish an empirical definition for research.

ANS: E

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.1

MSC: Applied

TRUE/FALSE

1. Longitudinal research investigates characteristics of a population over time.

ANS: T

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.1

MSC: Conceptual

2. Secondary data analysis is used when the researcher has collected data for the second time.

ANS: F

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

3. The researcher engaged in secondary data analysis may use the same data for a new study and a different purpose.

ANS: T

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

4. The first step in the research process is to develop one or more hypotheses.

ANS: F

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.1

MSC: Factual

5. Random sampling is a technique where a random number of people are selected from any size group by a researcher in a particular geographic location.
- ANS: F REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.4
MSC: Conceptual
6. Independent and dependent variables are found in statements of causality; however, they are **not** necessary for statements of association.
- ANS: F REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.3
MSC: Conceptual
7. A dependent variable changes in response to changes in the independent variable.
- ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.3
MSC: Factual
8. In the hypothesis "poverty produces low self-esteem," poverty is the dependent variable.
- ANS: F REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.3
MSC: Applied
9. Researcher bias is the tendency to select data that supports the researcher's hypothesis.
- ANS: T REF: Objectivity in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.8 MSC: Factual
10. An open-ended interview is often more flexible than other forms of survey data because the format can be varied, changed, or modified while it is in progress.
- ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Conceptual
11. Internet researchers do not need to follow the same guidelines for protecting human subjects because everything is virtual.
- ANS: F REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Factual
12. Participant observers attempt to get to know as much as possible about all members of the group being studied.
- ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Conceptual
13. Representative samples have strong advantages over many other forms of sampling in allowing researchers to generalize their findings to larger populations of people they are studying.
- ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.4
MSC: Conceptual
14. The way to ensure that a sample is representative of the population being studied is to try to incorporate as many members of the population as possible.

ANS: F REF: The Sociological Process OBJ: 2.4
MSC: Conceptual

15. In a random sample, every element sampled has an equal chance of being either selected or not selected.

ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.4
MSC: Factual

16. The ethical research guidelines regulate Internet-based surveys because they are so popular.

ANS: F REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Applied

17. Blind investigations are a standard method for dealing with researcher bias.

ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Conceptual

18. After starting a research project and gaining consent from your subjects, you discover that the machine you are using to project social party sounds for interpretation can damage the subjects' hearing. You must stop the study right away.

ANS: T REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Applied

19. If only information that supports the research hypothesis is published, researcher bias has occurred.

ANS: T REF: Objectivity in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.8 MSC: Conceptual

20. During a double-blind investigation, both the investigators and their subjects are unaware of the hypothesis being tested.

ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Factual

21. The mean, or average, becomes a valuable measure of central tendency when the data include extreme figures or scores.

ANS: F REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.6
MSC: Conceptual

22. The median is the number that occurs most often in a data set.

ANS: F REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.6
MSC: Factual

23. The mode is the number that occurs most often in a data set.

ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Factual

24. A discovery made by accident and not accounted for in the original research design must be placed aside and not reported. This protects the integrity of the original design.

ANS: F REF: Objectivity in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.8 MSC: Applied

25. Row and column labels tell you exactly what information is contained in a table.

ANS: T REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.7
MSC: Factual

26. It is acceptable to hide the purpose of your study from potential subjects if they will give you more information that way.

ANS: F REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Conceptual

27. Research is reliable when the same technique produces the same results on a consistent basis.

ANS: T REF: 42 OBJ: 2.2 MSC: Conceptual

28. Current federal regulations require that social researchers obtain informed consent from people who volunteer to be part of a research project.

ANS: T REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Factual

29. Once informed consent is given, a volunteer subject cannot withdraw from the study.

ANS: F REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Factual

30. Secondary analysis cannot be used as the basis for a longitudinal study.

ANS: F REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Factual

31. Secondary analysis is appropriate for contemporary investigations; however, it is almost useless for collecting historical or longitudinal data.

ANS: F REF: The Research Process OBJ: 2.2
MSC: Applied

32. Earlier research studies that did not follow the regulations to protect human subjects may have documented important findings, but these studies cannot be repeated.

ANS: T REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Factual

33. The protection of human subjects is an ethical ideal that we can strive for but never achieve.

ANS: F REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research
OBJ: 2.9 MSC: Factual

ESSAY

1. Outline and discuss the seven basic steps in the research process.

ANS:

Not Provided

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.1

MSC: Factual

2. Outline and discuss the four major categories of research methods. Discuss the major strengths and weaknesses of each.

ANS:

Not Provided

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Factual

3. Outline and discuss the steps to follow in reading and interpreting a table in a research study.

ANS:

Not Provided

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.7

MSC: Factual

4. Using your reading as a guide, write a question about a possible relationship between two research variables. Define the independent and dependent variables. What is the possible relationship between the two?

ANS:

Not Provided

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.3

MSC: Applied

5. Outline the three regulations for the protection of human subjects prescribed by the federal government and discuss how each regulation contributes to protection of individuals in groups.

ANS:

Not Provided

REF: Ethical Issues in Sociological Research

OBJ: 2.9

MSC: Applied

6. Describe a group or issue you are interested in investigating. Which research methods would be appropriate to use in your study of the group? How would you select or identify people as participants for your study? Be sure you identify the level and type of methods, and why the strengths and weaknesses of each method make sense as a best choice for your study.

ANS:

Not Provided.

REF: The Research Process

OBJ: 2.2

MSC: Applied