

Chapter 3: Research Methods in Applied Social Psychology

Multiple Choice

1. All good research begins with a _____ that is often translated into a(n) _____.

- a. question; hypothesis
- b. question; operational definition
- c. variable; question
- d. variable; hypothesis

Ans: A

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Variables and Their Measurement

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. A person's income and favorite color are examples of _____ and _____ variables, respectively.

- a. quantitative; quantitative
- b. qualitative; qualitative
- c. quantitative; qualitative
- d. qualitative; quantitative

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Methods of Data Collection

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. With respect to data collection, what is true?

- a. Open-ended questions generally take more time to develop than closed-ended questions.
- b. One form of observational data collection procedure is the use of a polygraph in the analysis of a respondent's answers during an interview.
- c. A psychologist who plays in a sandbox with a group of preschoolers in order to gather data is engaged in in-group observations.
- d. Data collection methods may be divided into three basic and broad categories: surveys, interviews, and observations.

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Methods of Data Collection

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. A measurement that accurately reflects the meaning of a variable is said to have a form of validity called what?

- a. external validity
- b. internal validity
- c. construct validity
- d. convergent validity

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Variables and Their Measurement

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. The three basic types of question used in surveys are

- a. factual, quantitative, and constructed
- b. behavior, attitude, and factual
- c. attitude, constructed, and behavior
- d. quantitative, qualitative, and constructed

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Self-Report Methods: The Special Case of Surveys

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. _____ questions are used to collect demographic data.

- a. Attitude
- b. Behavior
- c. Constructed
- d. None of these

Ans: D

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Self-Report Methods: The Special Case of Surveys

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. “Should the county ban pit-bull terriers, despite their loving nature if properly socialized” is an example of what type of question?

- a. double-barreled
- b. loaded
- c. unfair
- d. straw man

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Self-Report Methods: The Special Case of Surveys

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. In constructing surveys, it is generally advisable to

- a. make assumptions about the respondent’s experiences, thus directing the question content
- b. use response alternatives such as “frequently” and “occasionally,” thus allowing some latitude in interpretation
- c. place demographic questions at the end because they tend to be boring and personal
- d. place demographic questions at the beginning because then participants will respond

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Self-Report Methods: The Special Case of Surveys

Difficulty Level: Medium

9. In a survey, the content of a question can affect how later questions are answered. This is called a _____.

- a. context effect
- b. context bias
- c. sequencing effect
- d. sequencing bias

Ans: A

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Self-Report Methods: The Special Case of Surveys

Difficulty Level: Easy

10. With respect to data collection, which is true?

- a. Compared with in-person survey respondents, Web survey respondents tend to yield higher-quality data.
- b. A question such as, “Do you believe the death penalty should be legal,” generally should be located near the end of a survey.
- c. Collecting demographic information is not useful.
- d. The more demographic information collected, the higher the quality of data attained.

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Self-Report Methods: The Special Case of Surveys

Difficulty Level: Hard

11. A rating scale is an example of a(n) _____ question.

- a. Likert
- b. closed-ended
- c. open-ended
- d. nominal scale

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Self-Report Methods: The Special Case of Surveys

Difficulty Level: Easy

12. Gathering data from a 50-year-old census report is an example of what category of observation, as reported in the text?

- a. historical
- b. retrospective
- c. indirect
- d. external

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Observational Methods

Difficulty Level: Medium

13. Suppose, as a researcher, you hypothesize that young school children engage in less cooperative play behavior when they have access to playground equipment than when

playground equipment is inaccessible to them. To examine your hypothesis, which method of observation would you be best advised to use?

- a. direct
- b. descriptive
- c. participant
- d. vicarious

Ans: A

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Observational Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

14. Which research design involves manipulation of variables?

- a. descriptive
- b. correlational
- c. quasi-experimental
- d. surveys

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Research Designs

Difficulty Level: Easy

15. A study in which a researcher manipulated the amount of smoke inhaled by laboratory rats and subsequently observed their rates of lung cancer would be an example of a _____ design, and a genetic predisposition to cancer in this research would be an example of a(n) _____ variable.

- a. correlational; dependent
- b. correlational; extraneous
- c. trueexperimental; dependent
- d. trueexperimental; extraneous

Ans: D

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

16. A true experiment allows a researcher to assess whether and to what degree _____ is affected by a change in _____.

- a. an independent variable; a dependent variable
- b. a dependent variable; an extraneous variable
- c. a dependent variable; an independent variable
- d. an independent variable; an extraneous variable

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

17. Independent variables usually have at least _____ level(s).

- a. one
- b. two
- c. three
- d. four

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Easy

18. Researchers attempt to rule out possible biasing effects of extraneous variables by using the following two types of control

- a. random assignment of participants and experimental control
- b. experimental control and within-subjects control
- c. random assignment of participants and statistical control
- d. experimental control and statistical control

Ans: A

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Easy

19. In the Gentile et al. (2009) experiment on the social effects of video games, the assignment of puzzles represented a(n) _____ variable.

- a. extraneous
- b. controlled
- c. independent
- d. dependent

Ans: D

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Easy

20. A pilot study was carried out in the experiment by Gentile et al. (2009) on the effects of video games on social behavior. The purpose of the study was to help ensure that the

- a. different levels of the independent variable were appropriately constructed with respect to the nature of their social content
- b. participants in the different experimental conditions were closely matched with respect to amount of experience playing video games
- c. possible threats to experimental control were minimized by equating the circumstances under which the different experimental conditions were conducted
- d. validity was not threatened

Ans: A

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

21. There is evidence to support the claim that people become more conservative in their attitudes as they age. Therefore, in an experiment that requires participants to make judgments about the content of music videos, not controlling for the age of participants would be a threat to _____.

- a. external validity
- b. construct validity
- c. internal validity
- d. internal reliability

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

22. _____ control involves making sure that participants in different conditions are exposed to the same environmental stimuli, except for the _____.

- a. Extraneous; dependent variable
- b. Extraneous; independent variable
- c. Experimental; independent variable
- d. Experimental; dependent variable

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

23. The use of _____ groups is a common feature of quasi-experiments.

- a. pre-assigned
- b. equivalent
- c. correlational
- d. extraneous

Ans: A

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Easy

24. Which of the following is NOT included in a quasi-experiment?

- a. control group
- b. independent variable
- c. dependent variable
- d. random assignment

Ans: D

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Quasi-Experiments

Difficulty Level: Easy

25. The pretest–posttest design can be depicted as follows: _____ → _____ → Observations.

- a. Independent Variable; Dependent Variable

- b. Treatment; Observations
- c. Observations; Treatment
- d. Independent Variable; Observations

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Quasi-Experiments

Difficulty Level: Easy

26. Teachers at School A were given a substance abuse knowledge test. During the next four months, the teachers attended training sessions in substance abuse. They were then given the knowledge test again. Teachers at School B were given the substance abuse knowledge test, and four months later, they were given the test again. What kind of design was used?

- a. pretest–posttest true experimental design
- b. nonequivalent control group pretest–posttest design
- c. control time series
- d. matched comparison group pretest–posttest design

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Quasi-Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

27. Suppose a police department wants to evaluate the effectiveness of a neighborhood foot patrol program in reducing the incidence of crime. Which design would be most suitable to use in order to conclude whether or not the program reduces the rates of crime?

- a. control time series design
- b. pretest–posttest design
- c. nonequivalent control group design
- d. posttestonly with nonequivalent control groups design

Ans: A

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Quasi-Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

28. The weakest correlation, as expressed by the following correlation coefficients, is _____.

- a. $r = .35$
- b. $r = -.95$
- c. $r = .19$
- d. $r = -.35$

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Correlational Studies

Difficulty Level: Easy

29. With regard to correlational research, which of the following is true?

- a. Correlational evidence provides stronger evidence about cause and effect than does quasi-experimental evidence.

- b. A correlation coefficient of $-.32$ reflects a stronger degree of relation than a correlation coefficient of $+.30$.
- c. Correlational studies involve independent samples.
- d. all of these

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Correlational Studies

Difficulty Level: Medium

30. In their research article on video games and social behavior, Gentile et al. (2009) reported a study in which Singaporean children's exposure to prosocial video games was positively correlated with an index of their tendency to display prosocial behavior. The researchers concluded that the results were consistent with the notion that

- a. prosocial behavior does not lead to increases in prosocial video game playing
- b. experience playing prosocial video games leads to increases in prosocial behavior
- c. a correlation exists
- d. there is no relation between prosocial behavior and experience playing prosocial video games

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Correlational Studies

Difficulty Level: Medium

31. A study about the effects of peanut butter on jam preference is said to have low external validity. This means that

- a. the data show a weak, negative correlation between the two variables
- b. the influence of extraneous variables cloud the interpretation of the findings
- c. the results cannot be generalized beyond this particular study
- d. the setting and procedures were not similar to what is found in real life

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Research Settings

Difficulty Level: Easy

32. When Latané and Darly (1970) studied the reactions of bystanders to a beer store theft, they were interested primarily in examining which type of validity?

- a. internal
- b. external
- c. construct
- d. ecological

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Research Settings

Difficulty Level: Medium

33. Chapter 3 reviews the basic dimensions of research in applied social psychology. Which is NOT one of the basic dimensions?

- a. research settings
- b. qualitative studies
- c. research designs
- d. methods of data collection

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Chapter in General

Difficulty Level: Easy

34. Research that includes both a _____ and a _____ reflects the mixed-methods approach.

- a. correlational study; quasi-experiment
- b. descriptive study; field experiment
- c. case study; lab experiment
- d. lab experiment; quasi-experiment

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

35. With respect to qualitative research methods, which is NOT true?

- a. Qualitative methods are less frequently used by applied social psychologists than are quantitative methods.
- b. Narrative research involves a process of collecting stories and then restorying in order to discern the commonality of people's experiences with an event.
- c. To investigate the culture of a group, the most suitable method is an ethnographic study.
- d. The qualitative research method that is most pertinent to the development of social psychological theory is called grounded theory.

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Medium

36. Qualitative research methods are used, in particular, to investigate

- a. a topic or issue once it is understood sufficiently well as a result of quantitative analyses
- b. basic issues in psychology, as opposed to more applied issues
- c. topics or issues that are more validly examined in a lab setting, as opposed to a field setting
- d. the meaning that people attach to a problem or issue

Ans: D

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

37. Qualitative research methods, as a type of inquiry, focus on which type of analysis?

- a. numerical
- b. textual
- c. algebraic

d. mixed methods

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

38. Narrative research focuses on

a. gathering detailed stories and then restorying them (e.g., to produce a biography)

b. gathering stories to find out what experiences people have in common

c. formulating a theory of people's actions, interactions, and social processes

d. describing and interpreting shared values, beliefs, behaviors, and language

Ans: A

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

39. Phenomenological research focuses on

a. gathering detailed stories and then restorying them (e.g., to produce a biography)

b. gathering stories to find out what experiences people have in common

c. formulating a theory of people's actions, interactions, and social processes

d. describing and interpreting shared values, beliefs, behaviors, and language

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

40. Grounded theory focuses on

a. gathering detailed stories and then restorying them (e.g., to produce a biography)

b. gathering stories to find out what they have in common

c. formulating a theory of people's actions, interactions, and social processes

d. describing and interpreting shared values, beliefs, behaviors, and language

Ans: C

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

41. Ethnographic research focuses on

a. gathering detailed stories and then restorying them (e.g., to produce a biography)

b. gathering stories to find out what they have in common

c. formulating a theory of people's actions, interactions, and social processes

d. describing and interpreting shared values, beliefs, behaviors, and language

Ans: D

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

42. The American Psychological Association (2010) has dealt with ethical concerns about the use of deception in research by
- calling on researchers to guide all of their research decisions in accordance with the overriding principle of respect for the dignity of persons
 - issuing a policy that bans the employment of deception
 - issuing a policy that calls on individual researchers to use extreme discretion in protecting participants from undue risk of physical and/or psychological harm
 - permitting the use of deception if researchers carefully adhere to a specific set of guidelines

Ans: D

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Research Ethics

Difficulty Level: Medium

43. In a postscript, the authors of Chapter 3 (“Research Methods in Applied Social Psychology”) cite the results of a study in which participants imagined a positive interaction with a stranger (Crisp & Turner, 2009) and a study in which participants completed an IQ test (Maier, Elliot, & Lichtenfeld, 2008). These studies were mentioned as a means of illustrating
- instances in which deception may be justifiable given the potential scientific value of the research
 - the nonobviousness of experimental findings
 - the practical benefits of applying a mixed-methods approach
 - a study that is high in ecological validity and one that is low in ecological validity

Ans: B

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Postscript

Difficulty Level: Hard

True or False

1. The difference between a true experiment and a quasi-experiment is that in a quasi-experiment, participants are assigned at random to different conditions.

Ans: F

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Quasi-Experiments

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Descriptive research is a qualitative research methodology in which researchers describe the characteristics of the population or phenomenon in question.

Ans: F

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Descriptive Studies

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. The difference between an independent variable and a dependent variable has to do with manipulation. The independent variable is manipulated, which typically causes a change in the dependent variable.

Ans: T

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Methods of Data Collection: Variables and Their Measurement

Difficulty Level: Easy

4. Causal explanations cannot be derived from correlational research primarily because there could be any number of alternative explanations.

Ans: T

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Research Designs: Correlational Studies

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. Mixed-method studies tend to produce studies that are weaker than what can be achieved by relying on one method exclusively.

Ans: F

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

6. As discussed in the text, decisions concerning how to conduct research in applied social psychology are made on the basis of three research dimensions: method of data collection, method of statistical analysis, and research question.

Ans: F

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Summary

Difficulty Level: Medium

7. Random assignment of participants to conditions and experimental control of extraneous variables allows researchers to infer internal validity.

Ans: T

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Summary

Difficulty Level: Easy

8. External validity refers to the extent to which one can infer that an independent variable has influenced the dependent variable—that is, has caused the difference in behaviors between the participants in the different experimental conditions.

Ans: T

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Research Settings

Difficulty Level: Medium

9. Experimenters rule out the possible biasing effects of extraneous variables by using two basic types of control: random assignment of participants and experimental control.

Ans: T

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

10. With observational methods of data collection, the researcher may observe and record some aspects of the participants' functioning. In the method of participant observation, the researcher is an active participant in the social situation that he or she has chosen to observe. In some cases, the researcher may even pose as another member of the situation.

Ans: T

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Methods of Data Collection: Observational Methods

Difficulty Level: Medium

11. Qualitative research is the form of research that allows applied social psychologists to assess the quality of the quantitative data they gather.

Ans: F

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Easy

12. If a researcher were interested in understanding what it is like to grow up as a transgendered person and therefore wanted to gather stories from a variety of transgendered people to learn about what experiences they had in common growing up, the researcher would want to employ ethnographic research.

Ans: F

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Medium

Essay Questions

1. To address specific research questions, applied social psychologists use a variety of data collection tools. Name the two basic categories of data collection, and give an example of each.

Ans: The two basic categories of data collection are (1) those that rely on self-report procedures or measures and (2) those that rely on observational procedures. Examples of self-report methods include surveys, personality scales, or aptitude tests. Examples of observational procedures include visual, auditory, or physiological observation.

Cognitive Domain: Knowledge

Answer Location: Methods of Data Collection

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Name the four basic research designs, and list the main features of each.

Ans: The four basic research designs include experimental, quasi-experimental, correlational, and descriptive.

Experimental

- Manipulation of independent variable(s)
- Random assignment of participants to conditions
- Comparison of groups on measured dependent variable(s)

Quasi-experimental

- Manipulation of independent variable(s) or distinguish between categories of people
- No random assignment
- Comparison of groups on measured variable(s)

Correlational

- Measurement of variables without manipulation
- Examine relationship between variables

Descriptive

- Measurement of variables without manipulation
- Summarize measurements of variables

Cognitive Domain: Comprehension

Answer Location: Research Designs

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. Specific research designs (experiments and quasi-experiments) typically involve the manipulation of different variables. Name and describe the three kinds of variables relevant to experiments.

Ans: The three kinds of variables relevant to experiments are independent, dependent, and extraneous. An independent variable is one that is actively manipulated (i.e., changed) by the experimenter. Experiments involve at least two levels (i.e., variations) of an independent variable. Participants who are exposed to a level of an independent variable are said to be in a particular experimental condition (e.g., warm-setting condition). Experiments often involve more than one independent variable. A dependent variable is one that is measured by the experimenter to determine if it changes in response to the manipulation of the independent variable. An extraneous variable is one that the experimenter wishes to hold constant across levels of the independent variable so as to rule it out as a possible reason why the dependent variable changes in accordance with the manipulation of the independent variable.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Research Designs: True Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

4. What are *quasi-experiments*? Name and describe two different quasi-experimental designs.

Ans: Quasi-experiments, also referred to as natural experiments, allow comparisons to be made in observations across time and among groups, with the assumption that these groups may not be

equivalent to each other. They differ from true experiments in that they lack random assignment. The different quasi-experimental designs include pretest–posttest, interrupted time series design, nonequivalent control group design, and control time series design.

Pretest–posttest → Initial observations are taken (the pretest), the treatment (e.g., an intervention) is implemented, and observations are taken again (the posttest) so that a comparison can be made between what happened before the treatment and what happened after the treatment.

Interrupted time series design → This is an extension of the pretest–posttest design. With this design, a number of observations are taken over time before a treatment (i.e., the interruption) is administered, and then, a number of observations are taken afterward. With this design, we can detect any pattern of behavior occurring before the treatment and whether the treatment affected this pattern.

Nonequivalent control group design → This design improves upon the pretest–posttest design as it includes a control group. However, unlike with a true experiment, random assignment is not used; the control group usually is a preexisting group and is not assumed to be equivalent to the treatment group. This approach involves a nonequivalent control group in which the treatment group is compared with a nonequivalent control group.

Control time series design → This design improves upon the interrupted time series design. With this design, a nonequivalent control group is added. This involves a series of the same observations for the control as for the treatment group but without exposure to the treatment.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Research Design: Quasi-Experiments

Difficulty Level: Medium

5. What is meant by *qualitative research methods*? Name two types of qualitative research methods.

Ans: Qualitative research is the name given to a form of inquiry that focuses more on textual rather than numerical analysis. As defined by Creswell (2009), qualitative research represents the “means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p.4). There are six main approaches to qualitative research; these include grounded theory, content analysis, narrative research, phenomenological research, ethnographic research, and case study.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Psychologists are legally bounded to follow a set of guidelines to ensure ethical conduct. Name and explain three ethical principles of psychologists or codes of conduct set for researchers.

Ans: 1. Respect for the dignity of persons—As the central ethical principle, psychologists’ respect for human dignity underlies all of the others. Due to this code, certain words and phrases are used over others. For example, the word *participants* rather than *subjects*. Steps are taken to ensure that participants are comfortable and feel respected at all times.

2. Minimization of harm and reduction of risk—Psychologists must take steps to avoid harming participants.

3. Informed consent—Researchers are obligated to describe the procedures to participants before they take part in a study. Participants must be informed of any factors that might affect their

willingness to participate, and researchers should document participants' agreement to take part in the study.

4. Freedom to withdraw—Participants must be informed that they are free to withdraw from a study at any point with no negative consequences for doing so.

5. Privacy and confidentiality—All information obtained from individual participants must be held in strict confidence. Confidentiality refers to restricting access to the data and to releasing results in such a way that each individual's privacy is not violated.

6. Minimal use of deception—Deception may be used only if the research has potential value (scientific, educational, or applied) and if there are no other viable means of investigating the research questions or hypotheses. Also, it can be used only if it does not put participants at undue risk and if, as soon after completion of the study as is feasible, participants are provided with a full description (i.e., debriefing) of the study's true purpose; an explanation of all procedures, including the need for deception; and an opportunity to withdraw their data.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Research Ethics

Difficulty Level: Medium

7. Grounded theory and content analysis are two popular forms of qualitative analysis. Describe, in detail, these two approaches.

Ans: Grounded theory—The purpose of grounded theory is to move beyond people's accounts of their experiences in order to formulate a theory of people's actions, interactions, and social processes as they pertain to a particular topic. The fundamental idea is that the theory is not arbitrarily developed but instead is "grounded" in the accounts of those who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation. With this form of analysis, the researcher conducts interviews with people who have experienced a phenomenon and tries to generate categories that capture the fundamental aspects of the experience. Once categories are developed, the researcher conducts more interviews in an iterative fashion until no new information that helps to clarify the categories is forthcoming, and the theory is fully developed.

Content analysis—Content analysis involves describing, analyzing, and interpreting patterns or themes within data. In content analysis, researchers search the data for commonalities or themes. Content analysis is often the first step in a more in-depth analysis, such as phenomenological research, but it can also stand alone.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Qualitative Research Methods

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. What is meant by *descriptive research*? Describe the objective of this type of research, and explain when it is used.

Ans: Descriptive research refers to explanatory studies in which the aim is to describe the phenomenon in question in an effort to identify important variables. The objective of descriptive research is to observe variables and summarize the observations by using descriptive statistics, such as means, frequencies, and percentages. Descriptive research is typically used when one wants to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon being studied.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Research Designs: Descriptive Studies

Difficulty Level: Medium

9. Research settings vary based on the type of research one is conducting. Distinguish between *laboratory research* and *field research*. List an advantage and disadvantage of each.

Ans: Laboratory research, as the name suggests, refers to research conducted in a laboratory setting, whereas field research refers to studies conducted in the natural environment. Laboratory research typically offers more definitive support for theories than does research conducted in the field. An advantage of laboratory research is that extraneous variables may be controlled to a greater extent than would be possible with field research. A disadvantage is that people typically don't behave how they normally would because they know they are being watched. On the other hand, an advantage of field research is that researchers tend to be more confident that participants' behavior is reflective of their actual behavior and not influenced by variables within the laboratory setting or knowing that they are being observed. A disadvantage, however, is that in field studies, there is normally not much control over unwanted influences as there is in laboratory studies.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Research Settings

Difficulty Level: Hard

10. Distinguish between open-ended questions and closed-ended questions, and list an advantage and disadvantage of each.

Ans: Open-ended questions allow individuals to respond freely in their own words to survey or interview questions, whereas closed-ended questions provide respondents with a specified predetermined set of possible responses. Open-ended questions are sometimes referred to as free-response questions, while closed-ended questions are considered fixed response, whereby you must choose from the options given.

An advantage of open-ended questions is that they allow for easy coding of responses into themes, categories, or keywords. This format is ideal when you are not familiar with the range of possible responses on a topic or an issue or when you want to explore fine distinctions in attitudes, opinions, or beliefs among your respondents. A disadvantage of open-ended questions is that the process of interpreting and coding data from these questions can be time-consuming and difficult.

An advantage of closed-ended questions is that they are usually answered quickly and easily by respondents and are fairly easy for the researcher to code and analyze. A disadvantage is that these questions are relatively time-consuming to design and require (in advance) some knowledge of the possible responses. That is, you need to make sure that all conceivable response categories are presented, often including an undefined alternative.

Cognitive Domain: Analysis

Answer Location: Methods of Data Collection: Self-Report Methods: The Special Case of Surveys

Difficulty Level: Medium