

## CHAPTER 2 Methods

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### CONCEPT MAP

- I. Research 101
  - A. Causality Versus Correlations
    - i. The Problem of Reverse Causality
  - B. Variables
  - C. Hypothesis Testing
  - D. Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability
  - E. Role of the Researcher
    - i. Experimenter Effects
    - ii. Power: In the Eyes of the Researcher, We're Not All Equal
  - F. Choosing Your Method
  - G. Data Collection
    - i. Participant Observation
    - ii. Interviews
    - iii. Survey Research
    - iv. Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis
    - v. Experimentation
- II. Ethics of Social Research

### MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. The two broad methodological approaches social scientists use to gather data about the social world are
- a. deductive and inductive.
  - b. qualitative and quantitative.
  - c. implicit and explicit.
  - d. correlational and causal.

ANS: B                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Research 101 (I)  
MSC: Remembering

2. Selena wants to study the bond between siblings. She chooses between the two major methodological approaches to research and decides to view and collect data in a numerical form. Which of the two major methodological approaches did she choose?
- a. qualitative
  - b. quantitative
  - c. traditional
  - d. experimental

ANS: B                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Research 101 (I)  
MSC: Applying

3. Norm is interested in whether pet owners are more likely than those who do not own pets to have healthier lifestyles (e.g., exercise regularly, drink moderately, and refrain from nicotine use). By comparing the numbers he gathers on both groups, Norm will most likely be using what type of research method?
- a. quantitative
  - b. inductive
  - c. speculative
  - d. qualitative

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Research 101 (I)  
MSC: Applying

4. Which of the following is an example of a quantitative research project?
- a. conducting a survey about how often people attend church
  - b. asking people to talk about the role of religion in their lives
  - c. observing how people behave and interact with each other in a church setting



MSC: Understanding

11. When one factor is said to influence another factor, it is called
- correlation.
  - association.
  - causality.
  - mediation.

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Causality Versus Correlations (I.A)  
MSC: Remembering

12. If the relationship between the independent and dependent variables is discovered to be false once another (third) variable is considered, that relationship between the independent and dependent variables is called
- spurious.
  - moderating.
  - mediating.
  - dependent.

ANS: A                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Causality Versus Correlations (I.A)  
MSC: Remembering

13. Which of the following factors is needed to establish causality?
- validity
  - time order
  - spuriousness
  - the deductive approach

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Causality Versus Correlations (I.A)  
MSC: Remembering

14. Which of the following is most difficult to do in social science research?
- say that two things change at the same time
  - establish that something is the cause of something else
  - argue that two things are related
  - propose a relationship between two variables

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Causality Versus Correlations (I.A)  
MSC: Understanding

15. Shamar has decided to study whether early childhood poverty causes lower well-being in adulthood. When he finds evidence supporting the hypothesized relationship, a colleague suggests that before he makes a causal claim, he needs to consider factors that came after early childhood and before adulthood. The colleague is making sure the researcher is meeting which condition of causal inferences?
- A correlation must exist between the independent and dependent variables.
  - The time order between the independent and dependent variables must be correct.
  - Other explanations for the association between the independent and dependent variables must be ruled out.
  - There must be a test for moderating variables between the independent and dependent variables.

ANS: C                      DIF: Difficult                      REF: Causality Versus Correlations (I.A)  
MSC: Analyzing

16. A sociologist finds a strong relationship between income and health. If he only assumes that the amount of income people earn directly causes them to have a certain level of health, and not that a person's health can determine that person's income, he is forgetting to consider
- luck.
  - reverse causality.
  - correlation.
  - deduction.

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: The Problem of Reverse Causality (I.A.i)  
MSC: Understanding

17. Andy hypothesized that the stress created during economic downturns would increase the probability of spousal abuse. Stress would be considered the \_\_\_\_\_ variable, and spousal abuse would be considered the \_\_\_\_\_ variable.
- a. dependent; independent
  - b. key; affected
  - c. moderating; dependent
  - d. independent; dependent

ANS: D                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Variables (I.B)  
MSC: Applying

18. Professor Clayton hypothesizes that travel to other countries increases students' abilities to do well in advanced sociology classes, so she conducts a survey study to test this. Which variable is her independent variable?
- a. the survey
  - b. travel to other countries
  - c. the research methods
  - d. students' abilities

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Variables (I.B)  
MSC: Applying

19. Which of the following is an example of a negative relationship?
- a. A diet high in fat greatly increases an individual's risk for obesity and other chronic diseases.
  - b. The less fat an individual consumes, the lower his or her risk of heart disease.
  - c. As nicotine consumption increases, the risk for cancer increases.
  - d. As the number of people vaccinated against measles increases, the occurrence of measles decreases.

ANS: D                    DIF: Moderate                    REF: Variables (I.B)  
MSC: Applying

20. Some factors are called moderating variables because they
- a. affect the relationship between an independent and a dependent variable.
  - b. affect the dependent variable but not the independent variable.
  - c. diminish the validity of the study unless it is representative.
  - d. can act as either independent or dependent variables.

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Variables (I.B)  
MSC: Understanding

21. A variable that is thought to be influenced by another variable is known as the
- a. dependent variable.
  - b. independent variable.
  - c. key independent variable.
  - d. spurious variable.

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Variables (I.B)  
MSC: Understanding

22. A variable that is thought to cause a change in another variable is called the
- a. dependent variable.
  - b. independent variable.
  - c. moderating variable.
  - d. inductive variable.

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Variables (I.B)  
MSC: Understanding

23. A testable statement about the relationship between two or more variables is called a(n)

- a. operationalization.
- b. reliability.
- c. hypothesis.
- d. natural experiment.

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Hypothesis Testing (I.C)  
MSC: Remembering

24. In social research, a hypothesis is best described as a(n)
- a. educated guess.
  - b. proposed relationship between two or more variables.
  - c. description of why a particular social phenomenon occurs.
  - d. explanation for why two variables are correlated.

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Hypothesis Testing (I.C)  
MSC: Remembering

25. A variable that is positioned between the independent variable and the dependent variable but does not interact with either to affect the relationship between them is called a \_\_\_\_\_ variable.
- a. moderating
  - b. spurious
  - c. mediating
  - d. causal

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Hypothesis Testing (I.C)  
MSC: Remembering

26. How could you operationalize the variable "academic achievement"?
- a. use overall GPA as a precise measure
  - b. observe student study habits before a big exam
  - c. send a survey to professors asking their thoughts on what good students do to learn
  - d. study three hours outside of class for every hour spent in class

ANS: A                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Hypothesis Testing (I.C)  
MSC: Understanding

27. The extent to which a researcher can claim that his or her findings are applicable to a larger population than was studied is known as
- a. validity.
  - b. reliability.
  - c. causality.
  - d. generalizability.

ANS: D                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Remembering

28. The likelihood that a researcher will obtain the same result using the same measures the next time he or she tests a hypothesis is
- a. validity.
  - b. reliability.
  - c. response rate.
  - d. generalizability.

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Remembering

29. If a researcher fails to accurately measure a concept in her study, she has created a measure that lacks
- a. reliability.
  - b. reflexivity.
  - c. validity.
  - d. generalizability.

ANS: C                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Remembering

30. After consistently burning dinner for a month, John found out that his oven's temperature gauge was giving readings that were 50 degrees cooler than the oven's actual temperature. John's oven thermometer can be said to be
- a. valid but not reliable.
  - b. reliable but not valid.
  - c. neither reliable nor valid.
  - d. both reliable and valid.

ANS: B                    DIF: Difficult            REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Applying

31. A strong study establishes validity because it is important that the researcher
- a. measure what he or she intends to measure.
  - b. generalize to a broader population.
  - c. conduct research in an ethical manner.
  - d. apply the research findings in a way that benefits the research population.

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Understanding

32. The more consistent the results given by repeated measurements, the higher the \_\_\_\_\_ of the measurement procedure.
- a. reliability
  - b. validity
  - c. efficiency
  - d. correlation

ANS: A                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Understanding

33. Sandra wants to study how students in their senior year of high school prepare for college. She starts by visiting an elite boarding school nearby. Sandra knows that to make general claims about seniors preparing for college, she will need to
- a. randomly select from the population she wants to generalize to.
  - b. return to the high school next year to study the new seniors.
  - c. be aware of her intentions, so the study will be valid and reliable.
  - d. visit more schools so that her sample is representative of the group she wants to generalize to.

ANS: A                    DIF: Difficult            REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Understanding

34. Because they are an accessible population, undergraduate students are sometimes used in sociological research. In relation to the concept of *generalizability*, this tendency could represent a potential defect in research because
- a. college undergraduates do not have the right to refuse without suffering negative consequences.
  - b. the experiences of college undergraduates do not provide a legitimate empirical resource.
  - c. college undergraduates are not a subset of the general population.
  - d. college undergraduates are not typical of the public at large.

ANS: D                    DIF: Difficult            REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Understanding

35. If a study's findings are generalizable, this means the findings
- a. are consistent across respondents in the sample.

- b. are similar across samples of the same size.
- c. will be the same across different types of populations.
- d. indicate what is true of the whole population.

ANS: D                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability (I.D)  
MSC: Understanding

36. Juanita is a graduate student studying male prisoners. She carefully considers how her gender, age, and education may affect the prisoners and their responses to her. Juanita is practicing
- a. reflexivity.
  - b. comparative research.
  - c. content analysis.
  - d. positivism.

ANS: A                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Experimenter Effects (I.E.i)  
MSC: Applying

37. You may do a study of college wrestling and use your experience as a student-athlete to access wrestling spaces, athletes, and coaches. Considering how your past opportunities and privileges influence your study and its findings is
- a. operationalization.
  - b. experimenter effects.
  - c. reflexivity.
  - d. common sense.

ANS: C                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Experimenter Effects (I.E.i)  
MSC: Applying

38. Shamus Khan used his status and privilege to study how
- a. racial exclusion works at golf clubs.
  - b. national wealth influences individual success at the Olympics.
  - c. gender shapes prison experiences.
  - d. students are trained at an elite private school.

ANS: D                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Experimenter Effects (I.E.i)  
MSC: Understanding

39. Ethnographer Mitchell Duneier spent five years hanging out with booksellers on the streets of Manhattan. His role as both researcher and participant provides a great example of the importance of
- a. maintaining firm boundaries between the role of researcher and the role of participant.
  - b. staying true to the ethical principles of the scientific method in our research.
  - c. critically assessing how our role as researchers may affect the people we study.
  - d. maintaining distance from those we study so that our results are not contaminated.

ANS: C                      DIF: Difficult                      REF: Experimenter Effects (I.E.i)  
MSC: Understanding

40. A qualitative researcher who assumes everything he observes would have happened exactly the same way if he wasn't there observing lacks
- a. generalizability.
  - b. reflexivity.
  - c. validity.
  - d. reliability.

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Experimenter Effects (I.E.i)  
MSC: Understanding

41. A U.S. researcher whose first language is English is interviewing undocumented immigrants about their community ties. The key reason the researcher must practice reflexivity in such circumstances is because
- a. there could be language barriers that will affect the accuracy of the results.
  - b. the researcher is likely to be advantaged relative to the respondents.
  - c. the researcher could be violating laws and putting themselves and others in jeopardy.

d. the consistency of the results from one respondent to the next may be weak.

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate

REF: Power: In the Eyes of the Researcher, We're Not All Equal (I.E.ii)

MSC: Applying

42. \_\_\_\_\_ are more often concerned with the factors that influence social life, while \_\_\_\_\_ are more often concerned with the meanings respondents attach to their behavior.

- a. Survey researchers; experimenters
- b. Sociologists; psychologists
- c. Positivists; interpretive sociologists
- d. Comparative sociologists; interpretive sociologists

ANS: C                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Choosing Your Method (I.F)

MSC: Remembering

43. The research process includes many steps. Which of the following steps occurs first in the research process?

- a. analysis
- b. operationalization
- c. observation
- d. conceptualization

ANS: D                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Choosing Your Method (I.F) | InQuizitive

MSC: Remembering

44. Positivist sociologists tend to use which of the following types of methodological approaches?

- a. quantitative
- b. qualitative
- c. inductive
- d. scientific

ANS: A                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Choosing Your Method (I.F)

MSC: Understanding

45. Interpretive sociologists examine meanings attached to behaviors. This most commonly leads them to use which of the following approaches to research?

- a. quantitative
- b. qualitative
- c. deductive
- d. scientific

ANS: B                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Choosing Your Method (I.F)

MSC: Understanding

46. If a study on social class attainment could be approached in several different methodological ways, this most likely indicates that

- a. the researcher has chosen a fruitful and promising line of inquiry.
- b. the researcher needs to pay closer attention to the validity of his measures.
- c. the researcher will have an easier time securing funding for the study.
- d. the researcher needs to more clearly operationalize the research question.

ANS: D                      DIF: Difficult                      REF: Choosing Your Method (I.F)

MSC: Understanding

47. Two key types of qualitative methods are

- a. structured interviews and content analysis.
- b. participant observation and unstructured interviews.
- c. unstructured interviews and experiments.
- d. participant observation and structured interviews.



ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Data Collection (I.G)  
MSC: Remembering

48. If a sociologist collects data on only one high school in a study of the effectiveness of its parent-teacher association, he or she is using which of the following research methods?
- a. experiment
  - b. case study
  - c. panel survey
  - d. content analysis

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Data Collection (I.G)  
MSC: Applying

49. Of the methodological approaches listed below, the method that typically requires the largest time commitment is
- a. an experiment.
  - b. participant observation.
  - c. a national survey.
  - d. an unstructured interview.

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Participant Observation (I.G.i)  
MSC: Remembering

50. Which of the following might be an advantage of participant observation research?
- a. The researcher has considerable control over the conditions of the research.
  - b. The researcher can uncover what people do rather than simply what they *say* they do.
  - c. The researcher maintains objectivity by staying in the "white coat" role.
  - d. It is a useful method for studying large and diverse populations.

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Participant Observation (I.G.i)  
MSC: Understanding

51. A potential shortcoming of survey research is that surveys
- a. tend to focus more on what people do than what they say.
  - b. rely on people's honesty and willingness to cooperate.
  - c. cannot reflect the total population.
  - d. cannot be used on large populations.

ANS: B                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii)  
MSC: Remembering

52. The type of method that is most likely to use a structured interview with standardized questions is
- a. comparative analysis.
  - b. historical analysis.
  - c. a survey.
  - d. participant observation.

ANS: C                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii)  
MSC: Remembering

53. What is the difference between a census and a study that is not a census?
- a. A census by definition extends over a long period of time.
  - b. A census involves interviews.
  - c. A census collects data on the entire study population.
  - d. A census involves a written survey.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii) | InQuizitive

MSC: Remembering

54. Which phrase describes a study in which all sample members are surveyed only once?
- cross-sectional study
  - panel study
  - interview
  - census

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii) | InQuizitive

MSC: Remembering

55. The General Social Survey (GSS) is replicated yearly with a new sample of 2,000 respondents. This is an example of a
- panel study.
  - content analysis.
  - repeated cross-sectional survey.
  - census.

ANS: C                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii)

MSC: Applying

56. Sandra is doing research to determine how common cheating is among students at Duke University. The student body at Duke will serve as her
- dependent variable.
  - population.
  - random sample.
  - hypothesis.

ANS: B                      DIF: Difficult                      REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii)

MSC: Applying

57. Charles is a sociologist studying a population of gay fathers in the United States. He interviews 200 men in his data collection. These 200 men constitute what researchers call a
- census.
  - case study.
  - sample.
  - participant observation.

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii)

MSC: Understanding

58. The main reason that achieving high response rates and limiting selection bias are so important is that they
- increase generalizability.
  - decrease generalizability.
  - increase validity.
  - decrease validity.

ANS: A                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii)

MSC: Understanding

59. \_\_\_\_\_ is generally the best method available to the social scientist interested in collecting original data to describe a population too large to observe directly.
- Survey research
  - Content analysis
  - Comparative research
  - An experiment

ANS: A                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii)

MSC: Understanding

60. A type of longitudinal study in which the same sample of respondents is tracked over a long period of time is known as
- a census.
  - participant observation.
  - the historical method.
  - a panel survey.

ANS: D                    DIF: Moderate            REF: Survey Research (I.G.iii)  
MSC: Understanding

61. Which of the following methods involves collecting data from written reports or other artifacts in order to discover patterns in behaviors or attitudes dating to an earlier time period?
- a. experiments
  - b. audit studies
  - c. panel surveys
  - d. historical methods

ANS: D                    DIF: Easy  
REF: Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis (I.G.iv)  
MSC: Remembering

62. Roger Brubaker's study analyzed notions of citizenship in both France and Germany. His method of research is known as
- a. comparative research.
  - b. a case study.
  - c. an experiment.
  - d. content analysis.

ANS: A                    DIF: Moderate  
REF: Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis (I.G.iv)  
MSC: Remembering

63. A key strategy for conducting comparative research is
- a. to compare different historical time periods of the same society.
  - b. to use a combination of survey questions and content analysis.
  - c. to find cases that match up in most ways but vary in one key way.
  - d. to test for moderating variables that show different effects across groups.

ANS: C                    DIF: Difficult  
REF: Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis (I.G.iv)  
MSC: Remembering

64. Harry's study compared how the posts on Craigslist of "men seeking women" differed from the posts of "women seeking men." What method was Harry using when he catalogued the traits mentioned in posts?
- a. historical methods
  - b. comparative research
  - c. content analysis
  - d. interviews

ANS: C                    DIF: Difficult  
REF: Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis (I.G.iv)  
MSC: Applying

65. Jackson is using newspaper articles dating from the early 1950s to study unofficial attitudes toward working women post–World War II. Jackson is using what research method?
- a. experimental
  - b. repeated cross-sectional survey
  - c. comparative research
  - d. historical methods

ANS: D                    DIF: Difficult  
REF: Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis (I.G.iv)  
MSC: Applying

66. Social movements are often studied for their importance to a population from the movement's beginning to its completion. For this reason, social movements are often studied with
- a. generalizable survey data.
  - b. experiments.
  - c. historical methods.
  - d. structured interviews.

ANS: C                    DIF: Difficult  
REF: Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis (I.G.iv)  
MSC: Understanding

67. A content analysis of television advertisements studying messages about youthfulness would need to analyze \_\_\_\_\_ content if the focus of the study was on indirect and unspoken ideas about youthfulness.
- generalized
  - manifest
  - comparative
  - latent

ANS: D                    DIF: Difficult  
REF: Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis (I.G.iv)  
MSC: Understanding

68. If a researcher wants to study whether or not watching movies with content that negatively depicts women has an effect on respondents' gender attitudes, the best and most appropriate methodological approach she can use is
- a comparative approach.
  - a survey.
  - an experiment.
  - content analysis.

ANS: C                    DIF: Difficult            REF: Experimentation (I.G.v)  
MSC: Applying

69. Because social science involves studying people, many variables and their possible categories cannot be manipulated across respondents by the researcher. This makes it impossible to rely on \_\_\_\_\_ data for many social science questions.
- experimental
  - survey
  - interview
  - comparative

ANS: A                    DIF: Difficult            REF: Experimentation (I.G.v)  
MSC: Understanding

70. Which of the following is one of the golden rules of ethical conduct in social research?
- Always remain completely objective and neutral.
  - Never interact directly with research subjects.
  - Do no harm.
  - Never debrief.

ANS: C                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Ethics of Social Research (II)  
MSC: Remembering

71. Research subjects have a right to know that they are participating in a study and what the study consists of. This is known as
- involuntary participation.
  - informed consent.
  - manifest content.
  - validity.

ANS: B                    DIF: Easy                    REF: Ethics of Social Research (II)  
MSC: Remembering

72. When cities such as Detroit have requested an adjustment of census data, why has this research issue become a political battle? Because
- an institutional review board took the case to federal court.
  - the apportionment of congressional seats is tied to census study results.
  - it is women, children, and minorities who are most often undercounted.
  - requests for census adjustment must occur at the state level.

ANS: B                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Ethics of Social Research (II)  
MSC: Remembering

73. Identify a reason why some city officials and statisticians advocate using sampling to adjust official census counts.
- Evidence suggests that rural areas are undercounted in the census.
  - Evidence suggests that the census overcounts the U.S. population by 2 percent.
  - Evidence suggests that some groups are overcounted by the census.
  - Evidence suggests that the census undercounts some populations, such as African Americans, more than others.

ANS: D                      DIF: Moderate                      REF: Ethics of Social Research (II) | InQuizitive  
MSC: Remembering

74. A sociologist studies children at a day care center. She must get approval from an ethics board because children are a \_\_\_\_\_ population.
- qualitative
  - census
  - protected
  - total

ANS: C                      DIF: Easy                      REF: Ethics of Social Research (II)  
MSC: Applying

75. You conduct a study of romantic love among college students. You ask one student to participate, and she says she is annoyed and offended that you asked her. You have caused her harm, but does this level of harm constitute an ethics violation?
- No, because this harm is not physical.
  - No, because this harm is not greater than that which people encounter in everyday life.
  - Yes, because researchers should not annoy or offend people.
  - Yes, because in her subjective opinion, this constitutes harm.

ANS: B                      DIF: Difficult                      REF: Ethics of Social Research (II)  
MSC: Applying

## ESSAY

- Compare and contrast qualitative and quantitative research methods. List and explain two points of comparison (similarity). List and explain two points of contrast (difference).

ANS:

*Qualitative methods* seek to obtain information about human beings and the social world that cannot be readily converted to numeric form. The information gathered is often used to document the meanings that actions engender in social participants or to describe the mechanisms by which social processes occur. Examples of qualitative methods are participant observations and case studies (the latter method is directly linked to this methodology in the figure labeled "The Research Process").

*Quantitative methods* seek to obtain information about human beings and the social world that is already in or can be converted into numeric form and statistical analysis. Examples of quantitative methods are surveys and weighing people on a scale.

Similarities between the two methods include a connection between theory and empirical observations; and careful definition, operationalization, and measurement of constructs/ideas.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Research 101 (I)

MSC: Analyzing

2. Create a hypothesis about the relationship between student engagement in college and academic performance. Identify the independent and dependent variables. Operationalize these variables. Justify the validity of your operationalization.

ANS:

The hypothesis should be stated in causal terms: More student engagement *leads to* or *causes* better academic performance. The dependent variable is the outcome the hypothesis seeks to explain, and the independent variable is the factor that has an impact on the dependent variable. In this case, it could be hypothesized that more student engagement leads to better academic performance.

Operationalization is the precise ways in which the variables are measured. Student engagement could be operationalized with measures of class attendance, class participation, participation in extracurricular activities, or visiting faculty during office hours. Academic performance could be measured with GPA, scores on exams, or some test of understanding.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Research 101 (I)

MSC: Evaluating

3. A sociologist is interested in understanding the ways in which inmates experience prison and the effect prison has on their post-sentence employment prospects. Describe a study design (i.e., a methodological approach) that would address this question. List two advantages of this design. List two disadvantages of this design.

ANS:

Students could design a qualitative study, which would involve observations or interviews, or a quantitative study involving a survey or analysis of prison records. The pros of a survey would be the generalizability of the results, the relative ease of administering it, and its safety and feasibility in this context. The cons of such a method would be the difficulty in gaining an in-depth understanding about well-being. The pros of a qualitative approach would be the ability to get an in-depth sense of the kinds of problems prisoners experience both in prison and when trying to get a job. The cons would include ethical issues and its lack of generalizability.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Research 101 (I)

MSC: Evaluating

4. What is an important difference between *correlation* and *causation*? Which is harder to establish, and why? Use an example to explain your answer.

ANS:

To say that two things are *correlated* is simply to say that two things vary at the same time (simultaneously). Causation, however, asserts that one thing *causes* the other. It is much easier to say that two things are correlated but very difficult to assert that a change in one factor causes a change in another. One reason it is difficult to establish *causality* is because we need to be careful to rule out other factors (*alternative explanations*) that might be causing the variation and thus explaining the relationship. To establish causality, you also need to know which variable precedes the other in time (*time order*). You don't need to go to all of this trouble to say that two things are simply related (*correlated*).

An example of a correlation would be ice cream sales and the number of reported drownings. As ice cream sales increase, the number of reported drownings increases. There is a relationship between the two (correlation), but it would be far-fetched to argue that ice cream sales *cause* drownings to increase (or vice versa). In reality, there is a third variable (heat of the summer) that causes both: Ice cream sales increase in warmer weather and drownings (swimming) are more likely to occur in warmer weather.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Causality Versus Correlations (I.A)  
MSC: Analyzing

5. Define *hypothesis*. State a hypothesis of your own using, for example, the variables *weight* and *eating habits* or *access to healthful foods* and *eating habits*. Please be sure to define what a hypothesis is. Identify the independent variable (X). Identify the dependent variable (Y). Please briefly explain what makes each variable either the independent or dependent variable.

ANS:

A *hypothesis* is a proposed relationship between two variables, usually with a stated direction clearly predicting whether the variables move together in a positive direction or in opposite, negative directions.

One example of a hypothesis is, "Poor eating habits are likely to lead to people being over their ideal weight" (X is poor eating habits; Y is weight). Another is, "The less access a person has to healthful foods, the greater the likelihood that he or she has poor eating habits" (X is weight; Y is eating habits).

A null hypothesis could read, "A person's eating habits have nothing to do with his or her weight or his or her access to healthful foods" (X is eating habits; Y is weight).

DIF: Moderate      REF: Hypothesis Testing (I.C)      MSC: Analyzing

6. Describe one significant difference between *white coat effects* and *reflexivity* in social research. Offer one reason why awareness of white coat effects is important. Offer one reason why reflexivity is important.

ANS:

*White coat effects* are the ways that researchers affect (mostly unintentionally) the people they study. When a researcher's presence impacts the very processes and relationships he or she is looking at, this could be problematic and could lead to "faulty" data. An example of a white coat effect is a research setting where a person in a marginalized racial-ethnic group may act differently when a white researcher is studying them. An awareness of stereotypes of one's own group, or a feeling of unease at the power imbalance between the researcher and the person being studied can result in different behavior than the researcher would otherwise observe. In the medical literature, there are examples of patients having higher blood pressure levels measured in clinical settings than at home due to anxiety around the doctor. These are both examples of *white coat effect*.

*Reflexivity* is when a researcher is aware of the white coat effects that he or she might be causing. To be reflexive is to examine one's potential role in, and the effect this might have on, the research itself. When the researcher's own perception and experience of events become the data from which he or she makes claims, it is important to acknowledge any potential bias. If researchers are not reflexive, they may believe that their presence has absolutely no effect on subjects' attitudes and behavior, which is unlikely.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Experimenter Effects (I.E.i)      MSC: Analyzing

7. List two of the elements that Sandra Harding proposed as essential to feminist methodologies. Explain how one of them would influence a study about violence in society.

ANS:

Harding proposed that the following three elements are essential to feminist methods in social research:

- (1) Treat women's and girls' experiences as legitimate empirical and theoretical resources.
- (2) Engage in social science that may bring about policy changes (i.e., public sociology) to help improve women's (and perhaps men's) lives.
- (3) Take into account the researcher as much as the overt subject matter. When we enter a research situation, an imbalance of power usually exists between the researcher and the research subjects, and we need to take that power dimension seriously. The point of adopting feminist methods is not to exclude men or male perspectives. It means taking all subjects seriously rather than privileging one type of data, experience, or worldview over another.

The student will then need to apply these elements to the study of societal violence.

DIF: Difficult      REF: Power: In the Eyes of the Researcher, We're Not All Equal (I.E.ii)  
 MSC: Analyzing

8. Your textbook gives an example of research comparing gun ownership and deaths from firearms in the United States and Australia. Relying on your textbook's discussion, please outline why these two countries are good choices for this comparative research question. Be sure to explain how your answer connects to the key components of comparative research.

ANS:

Students should outline the similarities between the United States and Australia, most notably their similar gun culture prior to legislative changes, and how this allows the two societies to be compared as similar in the most relevant respects, with the exception of the divergence in reactionary gun legislation after a mass shooting. This approach—to compare entities that are similar with the exception of one key dimension—is the central feature of comparative research, which allows researchers to study the effect of some variable (such as gun policy) on another variable (such as firearm deaths).

DIF: Moderate  
 REF: Historical Methods, Comparative Research, and Content Analysis (I.G.iv)  
 MSC: Analyzing

9. The instructor of an introductory sociology class asks his students to fill out a questionnaire that he hopes to analyze and eventually publish. He tells his students that if they choose not to fill out the questionnaire, they will have points deducted from their next test. Which *golden rule(s)* of research does this situation violate? How could this ethical breach cause harm, and to whom? Revise the study, offering one suggestion of how the instructor could handle the situation in a more ethical manner.

ANS:

The instructor clearly violates the rule of *voluntary participation* because the students should have the right to refuse to participate in the study without being penalized.

In terms of *white coat effects*, the students are in a precarious situation because the instructor has more power. Even if the students had been told that their participation in the survey was completely voluntary (as it should have been), they may still fear that nonparticipation would adversely affect their grade and/or the instructor's feelings toward them.

The students should be told that their participation is completely voluntary—they should *not* be penalized in any way for nonparticipation. The students should also be guaranteed *complete anonymity*. The instructor could accomplish this in a variety of ways: He or she could leave the room while the questionnaires are being completed, the students could be asked to return the questionnaires by mail, or the students could be asked to drop them in a box near the door on their way out of the classroom.

DIF: Moderate      REF: Ethics of Social Research (II)      MSC: Evaluating