

Multiple Choice Questions

1) 'Research methods':

- ☐ a) is a term used to refer to all aspects of the implementation of methods.
- ☒ b) are the procedures a researcher uses to gather information.
- ☐ c) are a set of abstract concepts together with propositions about they are related.
- ☐ d) none of the above.

Correct!

Research methods are the procedures the researcher follows in gathering information, and methodology is a term used to refer to all aspects of the implementation of methods. Theory, on the other hand, is a set of abstract concepts (i.e. constructs) together with propositions about how those constructs are related to one another.

Check your answer

2) According to Janis's 1982 groupthink theory, which of the following would be an 'antecedent condition'?

- ☐ a) A concurrence-seeking tendency.
- ☐ b) A failure to examine the risks of the preferred decision.
- ☒ c) A cohesive group.
- ☐ d) The presence of mind guards.

Correct!

Janis's (1982) theory consists of one set of concepts representing the antecedent conditions of poor group decision-making, another set representing the symptoms of groupthink, a third set representing symptoms of poor decision-making, and a final set representing the process linking antecedent conditions to the symptoms of groupthink and poor decision-making. One of the antecedent conditions is a 'cohesive group', a group whose members are psychologically dependent on the group. Because they are dependent on their group membership, they are more likely to conform to what they believe to be the consensual position in the group. An example symptom of groupthink is the presence of 'mind guards', a term Janis used to describe group members who take it upon themselves to protect the group from information that questions the correctness or morality of the emerging

3) The process of selecting a subset of a population for a survey is known as:

- ☐ a) survey research.
- ☐ b) representation.
- ☐ c) triangulation.
- ☒ d) sampling.

Correct!

Survey research is a research strategy that involves interviewing (or administering a questionnaire to) a sample of respondents who are selected so as to be representative of the population from which they are drawn. The survey researcher's primary concern is with the extent to which the respondents are representative of a population (such as all adults living in a particular community, region or country). One way of addressing this issue would be to interview or collect completed questionnaires from the entire population in question (as is done in a census). If you are able to describe the entire population, the findings are by definition 'representative' of that population. In most cases, however, collecting data from all members of a population is simply not practicable. Then the researcher has to choose which members of that population to survey. The process of selecting a subset of members is known as sampling. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods and measures to research a given issue.

Check your answer

4) To test the idea that one reason for bystander apathy is that people are unwilling to take time away from their schedule to help another person in need, researchers asked each participant to begin the study in one building and then proceed to a second building to complete it. Before leaving the first building, the participant was led to believe one of three things about the speed with which he should go to the other building: that there was no special hurry, that there was an intermediate degree of hurry, or that he was late for the second part of the study and should hurry up. On his way to the other building, the participant passed through an alley in which a person (the 'victim', but actually an accomplice of the experimenters) was sitting slumped in doorway, head down, eyes closed. As the participant passed the victim, the latter coughed twice and groaned. The extent of the participant's helping behaviour was observed and coded. From a methodological perspective, the neat thing about this experiment is that it was conducted in a natural, everyday setting. Participants were randomly allocated to one of the six conditions of the experiment, so any differences found between these six conditions resulted in principle from the experimental manipulations, so internal validity was high. But the fact that the setting of the experiment was such an everyday one means that this

study also scores quite highly on realism. It is a good example of a:

- ☐ a) Laboratory experiment.
- ☐ b) Quasi-experiment.
- ☐ c) True randomized experiment.
- ☒ d) Field experiment.

Correct!

A laboratory experiment takes place in the laboratory; a quasi-experiment is an experiment in which participants are not randomly allocated to the different experimental conditions (typically because of factors beyond the control of the researcher); a true randomized experiment is an experiment in which participants are allocated to the different conditions of the experiment on a random basis; while a field experiment is a true randomized experiment conducted in a natural setting.

Check your answer

5) Researchers were interested in male and female university students' views about employment opportunities for women. They reasoned that analysing how a group of 17 students talk about these issues would reveal the practical ideologies that are used to reproduce gender inequalities. The students were interviewed in a semi-structured way and their responses were transcribed and analysed. This is an example of:

- ☐ a) Quantitative research.
- ☒ b) Discourse analysis.
- ☐ c) Both (a) and (b).
- ☐ d) Neither (a) nor (b).

Correct!

This study by Wetherell, Stiven and Potter (1987) is an example of the use of discourse analysis, which is a prominent example of qualitative enquiry.

Check your answer

6) What name is given to a person who is ostensibly a normal participant in the experiment but who in fact plays a prescribed role assigned by the experimenter?

- ☐ a) Accomplice.

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- ☐ b) Assistant.
- ☒ c) Confederate.
- ☐ d) Confidant.

Correct!

The confederate (not confidant) is an accomplice or assistant of the experimenter who is ostensibly another participant but who in fact plays a prescribed role in the experiment.

Check your answer

7) In Milgram's (1965) study of obedience, a key independent variable was the proximity of the 'learner' to the 'teacher'. But which of the following was NOT a key condition of this variable?

- ☐ a) The learner and teacher were in separate rooms.
- ☒ b) The teacher could see the learner but could not hear him.
- ☐ c) The teacher could both see and hear the learner's reactions.
- ☐ d) The teacher had to hold the learner's hand down on a metal plate.

Correct!

In one condition, learner and teacher were in separate rooms and the teacher could not hear or see the learner's reactions to the shocks; in a second condition, the teacher could hear the learner but could not see him; in a third condition, the teacher could both see and hear the learner's reactions; in a fourth condition, the teacher had to hold the learner's hand down on a metal plate in order for the shock to be delivered (the touch-proximity condition). All other aspects of the experimental setting were held constant, so that variations in the teachers' behaviour in these four conditions were attributable to the change in proximity between teacher and learner.

Check your answer

8) Which of the following statements about deception is FALSE?

- ☐ a) If Milgram's participants had been told the truth about his experiment, the rate of disobedience would have been higher.
- ☒ b) The APA and BPS recommend their members to follow their published

guidelines concerning research using human participants.

- ☒ c) During the debriefing session, the experimenter should explain when the deception was used and why it was considered necessary.
- ☐ d) If participants are routinely misled about research, this may well influence their behaviour in any future participation

Correct!

If Milgram's participants had known that his was a study of obedience, we can be sure that the rate of disobedience would have been higher: the participants would have wanted to demonstrate their ability to resist orders to harm a fellow human. Misleading participants about the nature of an experiment is now viewed more negatively than 40 years ago. The reason for this change is partly moral (i.e., where possible one should avoid deceiving someone else, whether or not in the context of an experiment) and partly practical (if participants are routinely misled about research, they will enter any future participation in the expectation that they are going to be misled, which may influence their behaviour). National bodies such as the American Psychological Association (APA) and the British Psychological Society (BPS) have published guidelines concerning research using human participants that have to be followed by their members. In a debriefing, participants are told the purpose of the experiment in which they have just participated, and can ask any questions they may have. It is especially important to debrief participants when the experimental procedure involved deception - in which case the debriefing should also explain why the deception was considered to be necessary.

Check your answer

10) Construct validity is best defined by:

- ☐ a) the generalizability of research findings to settings and populations other than those involved in the research.
- ☐ b) the validity of the inference that changes in the independent variable result in changes in the dependent variable.
- ☐ c) the fact that research participants are likely to want to be seen in a positive light and may therefore adjust their responses or behaviour in order to avoid being negatively evaluated.
- ☒ d) the validity of the assumption that independent and dependent variables adequately capture the abstract variables they are supposed to represent.

Correct!

Construct validity is best defined by the validity of the assumption that independent and dependent variables adequately capture the abstract variables (constructs) they are supposed to represent, while social desirability refers to the fact that research participants are likely to want to be seen in a positive light and may therefore adjust their responses or behaviour in order to avoid being negatively evaluated. In addition, Internal validity is defined by the validity of the inference that changes in the independent variable result in changes in the dependent variable, while external validity refers to the generalizability of research findings to settings and populations other than those involved in the research.

Check your answer

11) Which of the following is used to detect the operation of demand characteristics?

- ☒ a) Post-experimental enquiry.
- ☐ b) Unobtrusive measures.
- ☐ c) Non-reactive measures.
- ☐ d) Cover story.

Correct!

Demand characteristics are cues that are perceived as telling participants how they are expected to behave or respond in a research setting (i.e., cues that 'demand' a certain sort of response) and post-experimental enquiry is a technique advocated by Orne for detecting the operation of them. The participant is carefully interviewed after participation in an experiment, the object being to assess perceptions of the