

University of Djilali Bounama Khemis Miliana

Stream : Counselling & Guidance

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(Groups1&2).

English Exam

Self-report techniques

Psychologists aim to find out about behaviour. One way to do this is to conduct experiments.

Another method is by observation – called a non-experimental method. Another non-experimental method or technique is to ask people questions about their experiences and/or beliefs. These are called **self-report techniques** because the person is reporting their own thoughts/feelings.

This includes questionnaires and interviews. A **questionnaire** can be given in a written form or it can be delivered in real-time (face-to-face or on the telephone) in which case it is called an **interview**.

*A study may consist solely of a questionnaire or interview but often these techniques are used as a means of measuring the **dependent variable (DV)**.*

Consider these two examples:

The aims of a study may be to find out about smoking habits in young people.

The researcher would design a questionnaire to collect data about what people do and why. In this case the whole study consists of a questionnaire. It is the research method.

On the other hand the aims of a study might be to see whether children who are exposed to an antismoking educational programme have different attitudes towards smoking than children not exposed to such a programme. The researcher would use a questionnaire to collect data about attitudes to smoking, but the analysis would involve a comparison between the two groups of children – an experimental study using a questionnaire as a research technique to measure the DV.

QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEWS

Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a set of written questions. It is designed to collect information about a topic or topics.

Questions permit a researcher to discover what people think and feel, a contrast to observations which rely on ‘guessing’ what people think and feel on the basis of how they behave. With a questionnaire you can ask people directly; whether they can and do give you truthful answers is another matter.

Structured and semi-structured interviews

Questionnaires are always predetermined, i.e. structured, whereas an interview can be structured or unstructured.

A **structured interview** has pre-determined questions, in other words it is essentially a questionnaire that is delivered face-to-face (or over the telephone) with no deviation from the original questions. It is conducted in real-time – the interviewer asks questions and the respondent replies.

A **semi-structured interview** has less structure! Basically this ‘structure’ refers to the pre-determined questions. In an unstructured interview new questions are developed during the course of the interview. The interviewer may begin with general aims and possibly a few pre-determined questions but subsequent questions develop on the basis of the answers that are given.

This is sometimes called a *clinical interview* because it is a bit like the kind of interview you might have with a doctor. He or she starts with some pre-determined questions but further questions are developed as a response to your answers.

In questionnaires and interviews there are two types of questions and each collects a specific kind of data.

Closed questions – the range of possible answers is fixed, such as listing five possible answers for respondents to choose from or asking a question with a yes/no/maybe answer. Such closed questions are easier to analyse but respondents may be forced to select answers that don’t represent their real thoughts or behaviour.

Closed questions have a limited range of answers and produce **quantitative data**.

Both of these aspects of closed questions make the answers easier to analyse using graphs and measures like the **mean**.

Open questions – there is an infinite range of possible answers. For example, ‘What do you like most about your job?’ or ‘What makes you feel stressed at work?’ you may get 50 different answers from 50 people.

Open questions produce **qualitative data** which are more difficult to summarise because there is likely to be such a wide range of responses. In any research study we are looking for patterns so we can draw conclusions about the behaviour being studied. If you have lots of different answers it is more difficult to summarise the data and detect clear patterns.

EVALUATION

Self-report

techniques

There are a number of advantages and disadvantages that are common to all methods of self-report. The advantage is the access such techniques allow to what people think and feel, to experiences and attitudes.

One key disadvantage of questionnaires is that people may not supply truthful answers. Observations permit much more direct access to genuine behaviours. It’s not a matter that people lie but they may simply answer in a socially

desirable way (called a **social desirability bias**). For example, if asked whether you are a leader or a follower, many people would prefer not to class themselves as a follower even if they are. In addition people sometimes simply don't know what they think or feel, so the answer they supply lacks **validity**.

A final issue relates to the **sample** of people used in any study using self-report. Such a sample may lack **representativeness** and thus the data collected cannot be generalised.

SECTION A :ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

1. Explain what is meant by *self-report techniques*

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.....

2 .Explain the difference between a questionnaire and an interview.....

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.....

3. Give **one** disadvantage to using a questionnaire rather than a structured interview to collect data.

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.....

C Using the table below match the words or phrases (1-7) with their corresponding definitions (A-G).

1.hypotheses, 2. validity, 3. sampling, 4. operationalisation, 5. bias, 6.self-report techniques, 7.target population 8. qualitative

A.precise testable research predictions

B.the selection of participants to represent a wider population

C.participants giving information about themselves without researcher interference

D.the extent to which results accurately measure what they are supposed to measure.

E.the process of defining variables into measurable factors

F.The group of people that the researcher is interested in. The group of people from whom a sample is drawn. The group of people about whom generalisations can be made.

G. distortion in the way people answer questions.

H.The kind of data produced when people express themselves in words.

1	2	3	3	4	5	6	7

Section B: Multiple Choice

ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION. YOU SHOULD PUT THE LETTER OF THE CORRECT ANSWER IN THE BOX PROVIDED.

1. Which is an open question?

A. Do you smoke? (yes/no)

B. Why do you smoke?

C. 'Smoking is bad for you' strongly agree 5 4 3 2 1 strongly disagree

D. How many cigarettes do you smoke a day? (less than 10/more than 10)

Your answer ☐

2. A questionnaire can be used as part of an experiment to measure:

A. the dependent variable.

B. the independent variable.

C. an extraneous variable.

D. a confounding variable.

Your answer ☐

3. Which one is *not* a type of interview?

A. multi-structured.

B. unstructured.

C. structured.

D. semi-structured.

Your answer ☐

4.What is a strength of using a questionnaire to carry out psychological research?

- A high response rates are guaranteed, giving representative data
- B. questions can be changed in order to follow new lines of enquiry
- C. respondents are unable to lie in their answers, giving reliable data
- D. responses can be compared to identify patterns in data

Your answer ☐

5.When a respondent answers in a way that makes them look ‘good’, this is known as?

- A. acquiescence bias.
- B. observer bias.
- C. social desirability bias.
- D.response bias..

Your answer ☐

6.Which of the following series of steps is the most appropriate sequence for conducting psychological research using scientific method?

- A. design the research, collect data, formulate hypothesis, analyse data, interpret data, report findings
- B. formulate hypothesis, design the research, collect data,analyse data, interpret data, report findings
- C. design the research, collect data, analyse data, interpret data, formulate hypothesis, report findings
- D. formulate hypothesis, collect data, design the research,interpret data, analyse data, report finding

Your answer ☐

7.Validity in research means that :

- A. the participants knew what they had to do.
- B. the researchers knew what they were doing.
- C. the research study produced results that accurately measured the behaviour or event that it claimed to measure.
- D. the researchers obtained results that were consistent and dependable.

In an experiment, the variable that is manipulated or

8. What is meant by the term ‘socially desirable responses’ in psychological research?

- A. responses which are personal even if they are subjective
- B. responses which are reliable even if they are invalid

C. responses which reflect the participants' wishes even if they are unacceptable to others

D. responses which the participants think they ought to give even if they are not true .

Your answer ☐

9.A researcher is interested in studying why some people willingly give up their personal time to help others. She has seen people operating a hot soup outlet for homeless people after midnight and decides to survey the operators.The researcher's sampling procedure is best described as _____ sampling.

A. random

B. convenience

C. stratified

D. situational

Your answer ☐

10.In an experiment, the variable that is manipulated or changed in some way by the experimenter is called the _____ variable, whereas the variable that is measured to find out the effects of the treatment is called the _____ variable.

A. control; experimental

B. independent; dependent

C. experimental; control

D. dependent; independent

11.Which is *not* a difference between a correlation and an experiment?

A. Experiments take place in a lab, correlations do not.

B. Unlike in experiments, there is no IV or DV in an correlation.

C. You can't identify causal relationships in a correlation.

D. There is no control of extraneous variables in a correlation.

12. Which best describes a negative correlation?

A. As one variable falls, so does the other.

B. As one variable rises, the other falls.

- C. There is no relationship between the two variables.
- D. Both variables rise and then fall.

13. Which is *not* an advantage of correlational research?

- A. They may reveal interesting patterns that can be followed up using other methods.
- B. They tend to be quick and economical to carry out.
- C. They provide information on the strength and direction of relationships.
- D. They can demonstrate causal relationships.

14. Before questionnaires are distributed, questions should be tested with a small group of respondents. This is a:

- A. Sampling.
- B. Correlational study
- C. inter-rater agreement.
- D. Pilot study.