

Ollscoil na hÉireann, Gaillimh
National University of Ireland, Galway

Semester 2 Summer Examinations, 2004/2005
Front Page Template

Exam Code(s) 2BA1, IOA1, IEM1

Exam(s) 2nd Arts

Module Code(s) SP220

Module(s) Methods for Social & Political Science

Paper No. _____
 Repeat Paper Special Paper

External Examiner(s) Professor Kevin Leyden & Professor Richard Jenkins

Internal Examiner(s) Professor Chris Curtin
Dr. Ricca Edmondson
Mr. Donal Igoe
Dr. Henrike Rau

Instructions: Answer Four questions in all, TWO from Section A and
 TWO from Section B. Please use a separate answer book
 for each section

Duration 2hs

No. of Answer books 2

No. of Pages _____
 Department(s) Political Science & Sociology

SP220 Methods for Social & Political Science.

Time allowed: Two Hours

Section A: Quantitative. Answer two questions from this section

Please keep your answers short and to the point. You may not reuse material from one answer in another answer.

1. In *The Elements of Social Scientific Thinking*, Kenneth Hoover explores how researchers “use a special kind of concept, the variable, to form a special kind of sentence, the hypothesis”. Describe the processes of hypothesis formation and operationalization of variables.
2. A contrast is often drawn between the inductive model of theory construction and the deductive model. Describe these two models, giving at least one examples of the use of **one** of these models.
3. What are the key features of experimental design as an approach to research design?
4. List and briefly describe the main stages in quantitative research depicted by Bryman.
5. (a) Why does Bryman assert that “validity (of measurement) presumes reliability”?
(b) List and briefly describe four types of validity (of measurement) considered by Bryman?
6. In Steelman and Mercy’s article: “Unconfounding the Confluence Model”,
 - a. What were the benefits and costs of including in the study only white children “residing in homes with both of their natural parents and no other adults over 20 years old”?
 - b. Why were separate tables of mean IQ by birth order and sibship size constructed for below-poverty status subjects on the one hand and for above-poverty status subjects on the other?
 - c. In the tables mentioned in (b) above, why were all families of sibship size greater than five put together into one category whereas families of sibship size one, two, three, four and five respectively were assigned to separate categories?
7.
 - a. What are the benefits of sampling as opposed to taking a complete enumeration of a population? What is the major disadvantage of sampling?
 - b. What are the defining features of any **one** of the following:
 - i. simple random sampling
 - ii stratified random sampling
 - iii one-stage cluster sampling
 - iv two stage cluster sampling

EITHER

8. Briefly outline any **ten** of the guidelines for conducting (structured) interviews suggested by Bryman.

OR

9. Bryman lists five advantages and eleven disadvantages of the self-completion questionnaire in relation to the structured interview. Briefly outline any **ten** of these advantages/disadvantages.
10. What are the sampling issues OR the issues of reliability and validity **specific** to structured observation as a research method according to Bryman?
11. According to Bryman, "there are three main contexts within which multivariate analysis might be employed". These are defined by the questions:
 "Could the relationship be spurious?"
 "Could there be an intervening variable?"
 "Could a third variable moderate the relationship?"
Briefly outline what is meant by each of these contexts.

SECTION B – Qualitative. Please answer TWO questions from Section B. Please use a separate answer-book for this section.

12. Discuss the main differences between qualitative and quantitative social research. Is it always possible to clearly distinguish between these two strategies?
13. What are the advantages and drawbacks of focus group research? Make reference to both data collection AND analysis?
14. EITHER
Some topics may require social scientists to conduct covert research. Is it ethically justifiable not to inform participants that they are being studied? Use examples to support your answer.
- OR
Compare and contrast the various stances adopted by researchers on ethical guidelines. Use examples to support more general claims.
15. How effective is participant observation as a source of sociological understanding?
16. What problems arise in the course of sociological writing and can they be solved?
17. What benefits does Grounded Theory offer that other forms of data collection do not?