



# RESEARCH METHODS MCQ REVISION BOOKLET

EST303

Faculty of Education  
The Maldives National University

This Booklet Belongs to;

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## RESEARCH METHODS (EST303) MCQ REVISION

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### Question 1

**What is a research design?**

- A A framework for every stage of the collection and analysis of data
- B A way of conducting research that is not grounded in theory
- C The choice between using qualitative or quantitative methods
- D The style in which you present your research findings, e.g. a graph

### Question 2

**If a study is "reliable", this means that:**

- A The measures devised for concepts are stable on different occasions
- B It was conducted by a reputable researcher who can be trusted
- C The findings can be generalized to other social settings
- D The methods are stated clearly enough for the research to be replicated

### Question 3

**"Internal validity" refers to:**

- A Whether or not the findings are relevant to the participants' everyday lives
- B Whether or not there is really a causal relationship between two variables
- C The degree to which the researcher feels that this was a worthwhile project
- D How accurately the measurements represent underlying concepts

### Question 4

**In an experimental design, the dependent variable is:**

- A The one that is manipulated in order to observe any effects on the other
- B A measure of the extent to which personal values affect research
- C An ambiguous concept whose meaning depends on how it is defined
- D The one that is not manipulated and in which any changes are observed

### Question 5

**What is a cross-sectional design?**

- A The collection of data from more than one case at one moment in time
- B A study of one particular section of society, e.g. the middle classes
- C One that is devised when the researcher is in a bad mood
- D A comparison of two or more variables over a long period of time

### Question 6

**Survey research is cross-sectional and therefore:**

- A High in replicability but low in internal validity
- B High in internal validity but low in reliability

- C High in ecological validity but low in external validity
- D None of the above

#### Question 7

**When planning to do social research, it is better to:**

- A Approach the topic with an open mind
- B Do a pilot study before getting stuck into it
- C Be familiar with the literature on the topic
- D Forget about theory because this is a very practical undertaking

#### Question 8

**Which comes first, theory or research?**

- A Theory, because otherwise you are working in the dark
- B Research, because that's the only way you can develop a theory
- C It depends on your point of view
- D The question is meaningless, because you can't have one without the other

#### Question 9

**We review the relevant literature to know:**

- A What is already known about the topic
- B What concepts and theories have been applied to the topic
- C Who are the key contributors to the topic
- D All of the above

#### Question 10

**A deductive theory is one that:**

- A Allows theory to emerge out of the data
- B Involves testing an explicitly defined hypothesis
- C Allows for findings to feed back into the stock of knowledge
- D Uses qualitative methods whenever possible

#### Question 11

**Which of the following is not a type of research question?**

- A Predicting an outcome
- B Evaluating a phenomenon
- C Developing good practice
- D A hypothesis

#### Question 12

**What does 'sampling cases' mean?**

- A Sampling using a sampling frame
- B Identifying people who are suitable for research

- C Literally, the researcher's brief-case
- D Sampling people, newspapers, television programmes etc.

**Question 13**

**Which of the following is not a data-collection method?**

- A Research questions
- B Unstructured interviewing
- C Postal survey questionnaires
- D Participant observation

**Question 14**

**Why is data analysis concerned with data reduction?**

- A Because far too much data is collected than is required
- B Because we need to make sense of the data
- C Because of the repetitions in answers to questionnaires
- D Because the sample size has been exceeded

**Question 15**

**An inductive theory is one that:**

- A Allows theory to emerge out of the data
- B Involves testing an explicitly defined hypothesis
- C Does not allow for findings to feed back into the stock of knowledge
- D Uses quantitative methods whenever possible

**Question 16**

**What is the epistemological position held by a positivist?**

- A There is no substitute for an in-depth, hermeneutic understanding of society
- B Scientific research should be based on value-free, empirical observations
- C Events and discourses in the social world prevent us from having direct knowledge of the natural order
- D It is important to remain optimistic about our research, even when things go wrong

**Question 17**

**Which of the following is an ontological question?**

- A Should I use questionnaires or interviews in my project?
- B What can (and should) be considered acceptable forms of knowledge?
- C How long is it since I last visited the dentist?
- D Do social entities have an objective reality, external to social actors?

**Question 18**

**The qualitative research strategy places a value on:**

- A Using numbers, measurements and statistical techniques

- B Generating theories through inductive research about social meanings
- C Conducting research that is of a very high quality
- D All of the above

**Question 19**

**An important practical issue to consider when designing a research project is:**

- A Which theoretical perspective you find most interesting
- B How much time and money you have to conduct the research
- C Whether or not you have time to retille the bathroom first
- D Which colour of ring binder to present your work in

**Question 20**

**How can you tell if your research questions are really good?**

- A If they guide your literature search
- B If they are linked together to help you construct a coherent argument
- C If they force you to narrow the scope of your research
- D All of the above

**Question 21**

**Which of the following should be included in a research proposal?**

- A Your academic status and experience
- B The difficulties you encountered with your previous reading on the topic
- C Your choice of research methods and reasons for choosing them
- D All of the above

**Question 22**

**Which of the following should you NOT think about when preparing your research?**

- A Your sample frame and sampling strategy
- B The ethical issues that might arise
- C Negotiating access to the setting
- D Being bias

**Question 23**

**Why is it helpful to keep a research diary or log book while you are conducting your project?**

- A To give you something to do in the early stages of your research when nothing is happening
- B Because funding councils generally demand to see written evidence that you were working every day during the period of the research
- C To keep a record of what you did and what happened throughout the research process
- D It can be added to your dissertation to ensure that you reach the required word limit

**Question 24**

**What practical steps can you take before you actually start your research?**

- A Find out exactly what your institution's requirements are for a dissertation
- B Make sure you are familiar with the hardware and software you plan to use
- C Apply for clearance of your project through an ethics committee
- D All of the above

**Question 25**

**To read critically means:**

- A Taking an opposing point of view to the ideas and opinions expressed
- B Skimming through the material because most of it is just padding
- C Evaluating what you read in terms of your own research questions
- D Being negative about something before you read it

**Question 26**

**Why do you need to review the existing literature?**

- A To make sure you have a long list of references
- B Because without it, you could never reach the required word-count
- C To find out what is already known about your area of interest
- D To help in your general studying

**Question 27**

**A systematic literature review is:**

- A One which starts in your own library, then goes to on-line databases and, finally, to the internet
- B A replicable, scientific and transparent process
- C One which gives equal attention to the principal contributors to the area
- D A responsible, professional process of time-management for research

**Question 28**

**Why is it important that personal data about research participants are kept within secure, confidential records?**

- A So that the participants cannot find out what has been written about them
- B In case individuals, places or organizations can be harmed through identification or disclosure of personal information
- C So that government officials, teachers and other people in authority can have easy access to the data
- D To enable the researcher to track down individuals and find out more about their lives

**Question 29**

**Which method is most commonly associated with a lack of informed consent?**

- A In-depth interviewing

- B Qualitative content analysis
- C Covert observation
- D Structured interviewing

**Question 30**

**Why is it "easier said than done" to ensure that the principle of informed consent is adhered to?**

- A It is not practicable to present every participant with all the information about the study
- B Sometimes it is desirable to withhold certain pieces of information, such as the length of time an interview will take
- C If the participants knew exactly what the researcher was intending to study, they might change their behaviour
- D All of the above

**Question 31**

**Apart from the fact that it is "not a nice thing to do", what is an important ethical disadvantage of deceiving participants?**

- A It can damage the professional reputation of the researcher and their discipline
- B It makes it more difficult to gain access to deviant or hidden populations
- C It means that records of personal data about the participants cannot be made anonymous
- D None of the above

**Question 32**

**The difference between measures and indicators is that:**

- A Measures are unambiguous quantities, whereas indicators are devised from common sense understandings
- B Indicators have a more direct relationship to the underlying concept than measures
- C Measures are intuitively devised and then applied as if they were direct indicators of a concept
- D Indicators are unambiguous quantities, whereas measures are subjective and value-laden

**Question 33**

**Quantitative social researchers rarely claim to have established causality because:**

- A They are more concerned with publishing the results of their reliability tests
- B They do not believe that this is an appropriate goal to be striving for
- C They keep forgetting which of the variables they have manipulated
- D They tend to use cross-sectional designs, which produce only correlations

**Question 34**

One of the preoccupations of quantitative researchers is with generalization, which is a sign of:

- A External validity
- B Internal reliability
- C External reliability
- D Internal validity

**Question 35**

Written accounts of quantitative research rarely include the results of reliability and validity tests because:

- A Researchers are more interested in reporting their operational definitions
- B Researchers don't really think that these tests are important
- C Journal editors have banned these kinds of articles
- D Researchers are more interested in reporting their substantive findings

**Question 36**

A sampling frame is:

- A A summary of the various stages involved in designing a survey
- B An outline view of all the main clusters of units in a sample
- C A list of all the units in the population from which a sample will be selected
- D A wooden frame used to display tables of random numbers

**Question 37**

A simple random sample is one in which:

- A From a random starting point, every nth unit from the sampling frame is selected
- B A non-probability strategy is used, making the results difficult to generalize
- C The researcher has a certain quota of respondents to fill for various social groups
- D Every unit of the population has an equal chance of being selected

**Question 38**

It is helpful to use a multi-stage cluster sample when:

- A The population is widely dispersed geographically
- B You have limited time and money available for travelling
- C You want to use a probability sample in order to generalise the results
- D All of the above

**Question 39**

The standard error is a statistical measure of:

- A The normal distribution of scores around the sample mean
- B The extent to which a sample mean is likely to differ from the population mean



- C The clustering of scores at each end of a survey scale
- D The degree to which a sample has been accurately stratified

**Question 40**

**What effect does increasing the sample size have upon the sampling error?**

- A It reduces the sampling error
- B It increases the sampling error
- C It has no effect on the sampling error
- D None of the above

**Question 41**

**Which of the following is not a type of non-probability sampling?**

- A Snowball sampling
- B Stratified random sampling
- C Quota sampling
- D Convenience sampling

**Question 42**

**Snowball sampling can help the researcher to:**

- A Access deviant or hidden populations
- B Theorise inductively in a qualitative study
- C Overcome the problem of not having an accessible sampling frame
- D All of the above

**Question 43**

**Which of the following is not a characteristic of quota sampling?**

- A The researcher chooses who to approach and so might bias the sample
- B Those who are available to be surveyed in public places are unlikely to constitute a representative sample
- C The random selection of units makes it possible to calculate the standard error
- D It is a relatively fast and cheap way of finding out about public opinions

**Question 44**

**The findings from a study of young single mothers at a university can be generalised to the population of:**

- A All young single mothers at that university
- B All young single mothers in that society
- C All single mothers in all universities
- D All young women in that university

**Question 45**

**Why is it important for structured interviews to follow a standardized procedure?**

- A To increase validity, as the interview can be adapted for each respondent
- B To increase reliability, because all respondents receive the same interview stimulus
- C To allow for an in-depth exploration of the topic
- D To make it easier for untrained interviewers to carry out complex surveys

**Question 46**

**Standardizing the interview schedule can reduce interviewer variation in terms of:**

- A The way in which questions are phrased by the interviewer
- B The order in which questions are asked
- C The procedures used to code and analyse survey data
- D All of the above

**Question 47**

**Closed ended questions are those that:**

- A Have a fixed range of possible answers
- B Prevent respondents from allocating themselves to a category
- C Encourage detailed, elaborate responses
- D Relate to the basic demographic characteristics of respondents

**Question 48**

**Which of the following might you include in an introductory letter to respondents?**

- A An explanation of who you are and who is funding your research
- B An overview of what the research is about and how the data will be collected
- C A statement of their ethical rights to anonymity, confidentiality, etc
- D All of the above

**Question 49**

**A filter question is one that:**

- A Ensures that all respondents are asked every question on the schedule and in the same order
- B Leaves a space for respondents to write long and detailed answers
- C Helps the interviewer to avoid asking irrelevant questions by directing them elsewhere on the schedule
- D Allows supervisors to distinguish between good and bad interviewers

**Question 50**

**Which of the following is not advised when planning the question order of a structured interview?**

- A Be wary of asking an earlier question that alters the salience of later questions
- B Expect some variation in the order in which questions are asked

- C Leave questions about sensitive or embarrassing issues until later in the interview
- D Group the questions into logically organized sections

#### Question 51

**An open question is one that:**

- A Allows respondents to answer in their own terms
- B Does not suggest or provide a limited range of responses
- C Can help to generate answers for closed questions
- D All of the above

#### Question 52

**In order to post-code answers to open questions, it is necessary to:**

- A Count the frequency with which each answer has been given
- B Categorize unstructured material and assign a code number to each category
- C Identify the three most commonly cited responses and give them a code
- D Find out where each respondent lives and make a note of their postcode

#### Question 53

**Which of the following is not an advantage of using closed questions in a survey?**

- A It reduces the risk of variability in the way answers are recorded
- B It makes answers easier to process and analyse
- C They prevent respondents from giving spontaneous, unexpected answers
- D Closed questions are quicker and easier for respondents to complete

#### Question 54

**Which of the following is a general rule of thumb for designing questions?**

- A Always bear in mind your research questions
- B Never ask a closed question
- C Always use vignettes rather than open questions
- D Use ambiguous terms to put respondents at ease

#### Question 55

**You should avoid using double-barrelled questions in a survey because:**

- A They rely too much on a respondent's memory
- B They make the questions too long, so respondents lose interest
- C They are too abstract and general in scope
- D They confuse respondents by asking about two different things

#### Question 56

**Leading questions should also be avoided because:**

- A They suggest ways of answering and so may bias the results
- B They create a mismatch between the question and its possible answers

- C They involve negative terms and unnecessary jargon
- D They ask about several different things at the same time

**Question 57**

**The value of piloting a questionnaire is that it helps you to:**

- A Test out your questions on some of the people who will be in the final sample
- B Identify and amend any problems in the question wording, order and format
- C Find out what a trained pilot would think of the subject matter
- D All of the above

**Question 58**

**The purpose of a coding manual is to:**

- A Provide a form onto which the data can be entered
- B Provide researchers with instructions about how to code the data
- C List all the categories that have been omitted from the schedule
- D Test researchers' knowledge of statistics

**Question 59**

**The data from each row in a coding schedule can be entered into a quantitative analysis computer program called:**

- A Endnote
- B N-Vivo
- C Outlook
- D SPSS

**Question 60**

**Which of the following is a method that is commonly used in qualitative research?**

- A Self-completion questionnaires
- B Surveys
- C Ethnography
- D Structured observation

**Question 61**

**What is meant by the term "grounded theory"?**

- A Theories should be tested by rigorous scientific experiments
- B As a social researcher, it is important to keep your feet on the ground
- C Theories should be grounded in political values and biases
- D Theoretical ideas and concepts should emerge from the data

**Question 62**

**Why do qualitative researchers like to give detailed descriptions of social settings?**

- A To provide a contextual understanding of social behaviour

- B Because once they have left the field, it is difficult to remember what happened
- C So that they can compare their observations as a test of reliability
- D Because they do not believe in going beyond the level of description

**Question 63**

**The flexibility and limited structure of qualitative research designs is an advantage because:**

- A The researcher does not impose any predetermined formats on the social world
- B It allows for unexpected results to emerge from the data
- C The researcher can adapt their theories and methods as the project unfolds
- D All of the above

**Question 64**

**Which of the following is not a criticism of qualitative research?**

- A The studies are difficult to replicate
- B There is a lack of transparency
- C The approach is too rigid and inflexible
- D The accounts are too subjective and impressionistic

**Question 65**

**Which of the following is not a contrast between quantitative and qualitative research?**

- A Distance vs. proximity of researcher to participants
- B Generalization vs. contextual understanding
- C Hard, reliable data vs. rich, deep data
- D Interpretivist vs. feminist

**Question 66**

**Probability sampling is rarely used in qualitative research because:**

- A Qualitative researchers are not trained in statistics
- B It is very old-fashioned
- C It is often not feasible
- D Research questions are more important than sampling

**Question 67**

**Which of the following is not a type of purposive sampling?**

- A Probability sampling
- B Deviant case sampling
- C Theoretical sampling
- D Snowball sampling

**Question 68**

What is involved in "purposive sampling" for grounded theory?

- A Using a random numbers table to select a representative sample of people
- B Strategically selecting respondents who are likely to provide relevant data
- C Deciding on a sampling strategy early on and pursuing it relentlessly
- D Sampling units of time rather than individual persons

**Question 69**

What is meant by the term "theoretical saturation"?

- A Deciding on a theory and then testing it repeatedly
- B The point at which a concept is so well developed that no further data collection is necessary
- C The problem of having used too many theories in one's data analysis
- D A state of frustration caused by having used every possible statistical test without finding any significant results

**Question 70**

Why is an ethnographic study unlikely to use a probability sample?

- A Because the aim of understanding is more important than that of generalization
- B Because the researcher cannot control who is willing to talk to them
- C Because it is difficult to identify a sampling frame
- D All of the above

**Question 71**

What can be generalized from a purposive sample?

- A That the findings are true for broadly similar cases
- B That the findings are true for the entire population
- C That the opposite is true for people who are the opposite of those in the sample
- D That purposive sampling is better than probability sampling

**Question 72**

What is one of the main disadvantages of using the covert role in ethnography?

- A It can be hard to gain access to the social group
- B It is difficult to take notes without arousing suspicion
- C The problem of reactivity: people may change their behaviour if they know they are being observed
- D It is usually too time consuming and expensive to be a realistic option

**Question 73**

What is the name of the role adopted by an ethnographer who joins in with the group's activities but admits to being a researcher?

- A Complete participant

- B Participant-as-observer
- C Observer-as-participant
- D Complete observer

**Question 74**

**Which of the following is not a type of qualitative interview?**

- A Unstructured interview
- B Oral history interview
- C Structured interview
- D Focus group interview

**Question 75**

**Which of the following makes qualitative interviewing distinct from structured interviewing?**

- A The procedure is less standardized
- B "Rambling" off the topic is not a problem
- C The researcher seeks rich, detailed answers
- D All of the above

**Question 76**

**Why is it helpful to prepare an interview guide before conducting semi-structured interviews?**

- A So that the data from different interviewees will be comparable and relevant to your research questions
- B So that you can calculate the statistical significance of the results
- C In order to allow participants complete control over the topics they discuss
- D To make the sample more representative

**Question 77**

**What is a "probing question"?**

- A One that inquires about a sensitive or deeply personal issue
- B One that encourages the interviewee to say more about a topic
- C One that asks indirectly about people's opinions
- D One that moves the conversation on to another topic

**Question 78**

**Which of the following is an advantage of qualitative interviewing relative to participant observation?**

- A It allows you to find out about issues that are resistant to observation
- B It is more biased and value-laden
- C It is more likely to create reactive effects
- D None of the above

**Question 79**

**Which of the following is a disadvantage of qualitative interviewing relative to participant observation?**

- A It has a more specific focus
- B It is more ethically dubious, in terms of obtaining informed consent
- C It may not provide access to deviant or hidden activities
- D It does not allow participants to reconstruct their life events

**Question 80**

**Which of the following is not a tool of grounded theory?**

- A Theoretical sampling
- B Coding
- C External validity
- D Constant comparison

**Question 81**

**What are memos?**

- A Notes that researchers write to themselves
- B Reminders of what is meant by key terms or phrases
- C Building blocks for theorizing
- D All of the above

**Question 82**

**Why should you start coding your data as soon as possible?**

- A To sharpen your focus and help with theoretical sampling
- B Because researchers always run out of time at the end of a project
- C Because it is the easiest task to do
- D To make sure that your initial theoretical ideas are imposed on the data

**Question 83**

**What is triangulation?**

- A Using three quantitative or three qualitative methods in a project
- B Cross-checking the results found by different research strategies
- C Allowing theoretical concepts to emerge from the data
- D Drawing a triangular diagram to represent the relations between three concepts

**Question 84**

**How might qualitative research facilitate quantitative research?**

- A By providing hypotheses that can later be tested
- B By helping with the design of survey questions
- C By informing the schedule of a structured interview



D All of the above

**Question 85**

**How might quantitative research facilitate qualitative research?**

- A By identifying specific groups of people to be interviewed
- B By showing the frequency of different responses to a survey item
- C By imposing a rigorous positivist framework on it
- D By combining laboratory experiments with structured observation

**Question 86**

**How might qualitative research help with the analysis of quantitative data?**

- A By identifying a sample of respondents for a follow-up study
- B By providing hard, statistical data about them
- C By making the research more value-laden and subjective
- D By helping to explain the relationship between two variables

**Question 87**

**Which of the following is not a limitation of the focus group method??**

- A The researcher has little control over how the discussion proceeds
- B It reveals the way social meanings are jointly constructed
- C It produces a large volume of data that can be difficult to analyse
- D People in groups tend to agree and express socially desirable views

**Question 88**

**What is the main difference between a focus group and a group interview?**

- A Group interviews involve fewer participants
- B Focus groups are used to study the way people discuss a specific topic
- C There is no moderator present in a focus group
- D Focus groups save more time and money