

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER 2010

TITLE OF PAPER : RESEARCH METHODS
COURSE CODE : ST332
TIME ALLOWED : TWO (2) HOURS
REQUIREMENTS : CALCULATOR AND STATISTICAL TABLES
**INSTRUCTIONS : ANSWER BOTH QUESTIONS IN PART ONE AND
ANY THREE QUESTIONS IN PART TWO**

**THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN
GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR**

PART ONE
(ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS)

Question 1

[20 marks, 2 points each]

Choose the correct answer from the alternatives provided.

1. In exploratory research one does all of the following, EXCEPT:
 - (a) Become familiar with the basic facts, people and concerns involved.
 - (b) Generate many ideas and develop tentative hypotheses.
 - (c) Determine the feasibility of doing additional research.
 - (d) Test a theory or explanation.
2. Professor Tun-jen Cheng wanted to study the cause for thousands of people from Hong Kong moving to Vancouver, British Columbia. In order to establish temporal order in his causal argument he must show which of the following:
 - (a) There is a correlation between events in Hong Kong and a decision to move.
 - (b) Events occurred in Hong Kong before people moved to Vancouver.
 - (c) A fear for the future of Hong Kong and no other reason caused the move to Vancouver.
 - (d) All of the above.
3. Social research methods include all of the following, except:
 - (a) Surveys
 - (b) Therapy
 - (c) Experiments
 - (d) Interviews
4. A local human service organization contacted Mr. Tanaka. The organization asked him to conduct a study to identify the difficulties and problems of the elderly in the local community so that the organization could develop social programs to help them. What type of study would this be?
 - (a) Needs assessment
 - (b) Cost-benefit analysis
 - (c) Planning, Programming and Budgeting System
 - (d) Summative Evaluation Research
5. Which best summarizes the main goal of descriptive research?
 - (a) Advance knowledge about an underlying process or complete a theory.
 - (b) Develop a detailed picture of a situation or issue.
 - (c) Extend a theory or principle into new areas or issues.

- (d) Provide evidence to support or refute an explanation.
6. A research method in which subjects respond to a series of items in a questionnaire:
- (a) random sample.
 - (b) target group.
 - (c) experiment.
 - (d) Survey.
7. Elizabeth Bethouse conducted a study of gambling establishments operated by American Indian groups. She examined two establishments operated by different tribes. During the study she spent many hours at each establishment and gained a detailed knowledge of the tribal leaders, gambling employees and gambling customers. She also investigated how the establishments were organized, their impact on economic development in the area and how tribal members saw them. She conducted:
- (a) a case study
 - (b) a summative evaluation study
 - (c) a cohort study
 - (d) action research
8. Joe Foss studied gender differences in attitudes toward mathematics and science among 45 first grade students. Over the next twelve years he studied the same 45 children when they were in the fifth, eighth and twelfth grades. This is what type of research?
- (a) Case study research
 - (b) Cross-sectional research (a study on a cross-sectional sample)
 - (c) Panel study research (a study on a panel sample)
 - (d) Action-oriented research
9. Social research methods are:
- (a) Ways to gather information to answer a question about the social world.
 - (b) Ways to convince people to participate in a study.
 - (c) Ways to manipulate people.
 - (d) Ways to increase the number of friends you have.
10. A research method in which a researcher asks study participants several conversational style questions and does not provide a set of responses to choose from:
- (a) case study
 - (b) interview
 - (c) comparative method
 - (d) quantitative study

Question 2

[20 marks, 12+4+4]

- (a) I design an experiment to investigate the relationship between viewing violence and committing violent acts. I randomly assign a group of children to watch an adult get angry at a "Bobo" doll. The adults hit and kick the doll repeatedly, shouting things like "Sock him in the nose," "Kick him in the leg." A different group of children (also chosen via random assignment) doesn't get to watch the doll beating. Then I give all of the kids a really frustrating task. I observe how they treat a "Bobo" doll in the testing room. I count the number of times the kids hit the doll. The ones who watched the adult hit the doll are more likely to hit the doll themselves.
- (i) Propose a hypothesis for the experiment.
 - (ii) What's the independent variable?
 - (iii) What's the treatment group?
 - (iv) What's the control group?
 - (v) What's the dependent variable?
 - (vi) What's my operational definition of viewing violence?
 - (vii) Can I conclude that viewing violence causes violent actions? Why or why not?
- (b) My hypothesis is: If a parent spansk a child then the child will be well-behaved. I've conducted four tests of the hypothesis. For each, write whether supported, not supported, or unaffected, based on your assessment.
- (i) I have parents spank their children and the children are well-behaved.
 - (ii) I gather some well-behaved children and find that their parents don't spank them.
 - (iii) I make parents not spank their children and the children are not well-behaved.
 - (iv) I get some children who aren't well-behaved and find that their parents don't spank them.
- (c) For each situation below, what analysis would you do? Why would you do it?
- (i) I collect information about people's sex on a survey. I want to compute the strength of the relationship between sex and number of shopping trips.
 - (ii) I also ask if people would like a shuttle to run from campus to Nashville. I want to know if the distribution of yes and no responses is different for the two sexes.

PART TWO
(ANSWER ANY TWO QUESTIONS)

Question 3 **[10 marks, 5+5]**

- (a) Describe deductive and inductive approaches to the conduct of social research. How useful are these terms as guides to social research as it is practiced?
- (b) What do you understand by the term measurement error? Describe how this might arise from problems of question wording and the use of interviewers.

Question 4 **[10 marks, 5+5]**

- (a) Compare the relative merits of two of the following:
 - (i) the mail questionnaire survey,
 - (ii) the telephone interview,
 - (iii) the face-to-face interview.
- (b) Assess the advantages and disadvantages of random and purposive samples in social research.

Question 5 **[10 marks, 5+5]**

- (a) Is telephone interviewing a better method of data gathering than self-completed mail questionnaires?
- (b) Compare and contrast the sampling strategies typically used in quantitative and qualitative research.

Question 6 **[10 marks, 5+5]**

- (a) Why are so many large scale government surveys based on stratified multi-stage cluster sampling methods? Illustrate with references to actual surveys.
- (b) 'The ethics of social research are mainly concerned with the issue of informed consent'. Discuss.

Question 7 **[10 marks, 5+5]**

- (a) What are the most important considerations to be taken into account when designing survey questionnaires?
- (b) What can be done to counter measurement error in social survey research?

Question 8 **[10 marks, 5+5]**

- (a) What are the strengths and limitations of using the internet as a means of conducting social research?
- (b) If you were to conduct research on how people use the internet, what ethical issues might arise?