



Sociologists Research Methods

What will we know?

- Difference between different research methods.
- Explain when it is appropriate to use each method.
- Be able to collect data from research.
- Make conclusions about data.
- Why does this all matter?

Basic Research Model

1. Define the problem
2. Reviewing the literature
3. Form a hypothesis
4. Choose a research design
5. Collecting the data
6. Analyzing the data
7. Presenting Conclusions

Research Design Methods

- The Historical Method
 - Analyzes research and literature already done on the problem.
 - Mostly written documents or recorded speeches.
 - Helps study trends, events over all different time periods.

Content Analysis

- Process includes counting the number of times a word, phrase, idea, event, symbol, or other element appears in a given context.
- Texts can include television, radio, sound recordings, movies, photographs, art work, newspapers, magazines, books, and personal or government documents.
- Easy to use and inexpensive; has been taken over by computer programs.

Surveys

- Uh duh
- Questionnaires and Interviews
- Ask questions. The person answers... BOOM.

Observations

- 2 kinds:
 - Detached Observation- Researchers watch stuff in its natural setting.
 - Participant observation- Researchers interact with the environment, becomes a part of the natural setting.

Case Study

- Intensive analysis of a person, group, event, or problem.
- Use survey methods and the analysis of existing source material.
- Useful in researching infrequent or temporary events.
 - Riots/ natural disasters.

Statistical Analysis

- Can be used with ANY of the research methods discussed.
 - Strength of a relationship between two or more variables.
 - i.e.: income, age, and level of education.
- Used in studies where data is collected in numbers.
- Use mean, median, and mode to analyze and find trends.

Homework

- Read pages S18- S23