METHODS OF SOCIAL RESEARCH

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PEF CZU – EMN


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All information are saved on the address: moodle.czu.cz
What does „Conceptualization“ mean? What is it?
How to conceptualize the research problem? First steps to clarify are?
What does „Operationalisation“ mean? What is it?
Pierre Bourdieu was a French intellectual and sociologist. He introduced such influential concepts as? Which?
Explain briefly „Content Analysis“. What does it mean?
Quantitative research:
- Presumes the conceptualization
- Typical collection of primary data
- Uses structured techniques of the questionning

It has 11 steps . . .
"Sequence of Steps"

1) Formulation of theoretical or practical social problem
2) Formulation of theoretical hypothesis
2a) Assessment of the natural system
3) Formulation of working hypotheses
4) Decision about population and sample
5) Pilot study (control of the object and population)
6) Decision about the data collection techniques
7) Construction of data collection tools
8) Pre-research (control of the research tool)
9) Data collection (→ social data)
10) Data analysis (→ social facts)
11) Interpretation, findings, final report
   (→ sociological information)
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Empirical Model of the Research Problem at Sociological Empirical Research

- Each social phenomenon is too complicated. That is why:
  - A) We reduce the research object
    - 1. by the *specialization of the RP*
      (and by formulation (wording) of the theoretical hypothesis...2. step)
      - study inner structure of the phenomenon
    - 2. by a *selection of variables of the phenomenon*
      (2a. step)
    - 3. by a *selection of relations between these reduced variables*
      (formulation of working hypotheses...3. step)
Each social phenomenon is too complicated. That is why:

- **B) We reduce the research subject**

  (Decision about population and sample... 4.step)

Sample: Basic File – Population

- Selective (chosen) File → Random Selection
  - → Intentional (deliberate) Selection
    - a) simple random sampling
    - b) systematical sampling
    - c) quota sampling
    - d) stratification sampling
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Empirical Model of the Research Problem at Sociological Empirical Research

1) Formulation of theoretical or practical social problem ✓
2) Formulation of theoretical hypothesis ✓
2a) Assessment of the natural system ✓
3) Formulation of working hypotheses ✓
4) Decision about population and sample ✓
5) Pilot study (control of the object and population)
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TASK 1
A) Conceptualize the research problem represented by this theoretical hypothesis (write what is the object, subject, explaining and explained variables):

Is the contemporary religion and education level of the Czech Republic’s population affecting the opinions of the necessity of the aid to Ukraine and effort for implementation of democracy in this country?

B) What are possible sources for conceptualization of this research problem?
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- **Who** *(SUBJECT)*? Population of the Czech Republic
- **What** *(OBJECT)*?

- Religion
- Education level

Is somehow affecting *(more/less)*

Opinions of necessity of the aid to Ukraine
Effort for implementation of democracy
Explained variables
  - = dependent
  - = consequence
  - = affected

Explaining variables
  - = independent
  - = cause
  - = affecting
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- Variables of the theoretical hypothesis are always a group of variables (not only one)
  - Education level
- One of variables of this group is:
- Degree of certified education

**Question:** The degree of your education is?
- a) elementary school
- b) secondary education without leaving certificate
- c) secondary education with leaving certificate
- d) college (advanced vocational training)
- e) university – Bachelor’s Degree
- f) university – Masters’s Degree
- g) university – Doctoral Degrees/Ph.D.

*Other possible variables: Study of foreign languages, Courses, Reading of scientific literature, etc . . .
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- Variables of the theoretical hypothesis are always a group of variables (not only one)

  - **Opinions of the necessity of the aid to Ukraine**

- Opinion of the role of EU in the aid to Ukraine

- Question: What is your meaning about the role of EU in the aid to Ukraine?

  - completely agree 1 2 3 4 5 completely disagree

- Other possible variables: Meaning about the feasibility of poverty removal in Ukraine, Meanings about the role of EU in the aid to non-Eu countries, etc...
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How to construct a questioning tool? (questionnaire, structured interview schedule)

- each variable (from the natural system – groups of variables) must be mentioned in the questioning tool as a question
- wording of working hypotheses must be consistent with the wording of the theoretical hypothesis
- according to rules use questions (closed-ended, fixed-alternative, contingency), formulate their answers according to variables (nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio) and keep the question order
- avoid problematic parts at the construction of questions and answers
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Working hypotheses

- Degree of certified education \((explaining)\)

  X

- Opinion of the role of EU in the aid to Ukraine \((explained)\)

  Working hypothesis:
  A difference in the agreement with the aid to non-EU countries is expected between respondents with elementary and university education.

  (how to formulate? → ideas come from previous conceptualization)
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TASK 2
Is the contemporary religion and education level of the Czech Republic’s population affecting the opinions of the necessity of the aid to Ukraine and effort for implementation of democracy in this country??

- Formulate variables of the group of explaining variables - *religion* (3 var.) and

- Explained variables - *effort for implementation of democracy in this country* (1 var.)

- Formulate questions for these variables and their answers (closed-ended, fixed-alternative)

- Formulate 1 working hypothesis from these variables
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- **Religion**
  - One of variables of this group is
  - **Type of the religion**
    
    ...transformation into question...

**Question:** What is your religion?

a) Without religion  
   b) Judaism  
   c) Christian Catholic  
   d) Christian Protestant  
   e) Christian Orthodox  
   f) Buddhism  
   g) Hinduism  
   h) Islam  
   i) Other religion (specify, please) .................
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- Religion

One of variables of this group is Religious values

- ...transformation into question...

Question: What is your religious values?

- a) Know Yourself
- b) Love
- c) Peace
- d) Fraternity
- e) Devotion to God
- f) Clear – pure moral
- g) Solidarity
- h) Religious Freedom - Freedom of Thought
- i) Other (specify, please) ....................
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- Religion

One of variables of this group is

- Religious rituals
  - ...transformation into question...

- Question: What is your religious rituals?

  a) Pray
  b) Belief
  c) Going to Synagogue
  d) Going to Church
  e) Going to Masjid
  f) Spiritual Clothes
  g) Meditation
  h) Vegetarians
  i) Other (specify, please) ........................
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Problematic parts in questionnaire / structured interview schedule construction: wording of questions

- **Double – barreled questions**
  - Questions with „or“ or „and“ in them should be checked to see if they consist of two questions with only one answer expected

- **Ambiguous questions, foreign words, scientific words, jargon and slang**
  - **Ambiguous** – the word in question can have two or more meanings – either similar or opposite ones
  - **Foreign word** – the word is taken from a foreign language
  - **Scientific word** – taken over from a foreign language. For example: water sterilisation (purification of water), social integration etc.
  - **Jargon** – every profession has a jargon, which is not understandable for respondents sometimes. E.g.: “technique” means the means of data-collection for sociologists, the mechanisation equipment for engineers, sport’s jargon etc.
  - **Slang** – every subculture has a special speech. For example: Street Artist makings the street art paintings - their vocabulary and stuff like that...
Leading questions

- Questions should be carefully structured in order to minimize the probability of biasing respondent's answer by leading him/her and thus artificially increasing the probability of a particular response.

Sensitive of threatening questions

- Sensitive topics such as sex, or taboo topics such as suicide, are prone to normative answers - that is, answers that are consistent with a norm.
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TASK 3
1. You don't eat sweets, do you?
2. Do you attend either cinema or theatre?
3. Do you cheat at written tests?
4. Is anyone in your family a dipsomaniac?
5. The majority of physicians in the world feel that getting stressed is harmful; do you agree?
6. Does your department have a special recruitment policy for racial minorities and women?
7. Is also more sympathetic for you as a presidential candidate Obama than Bush?
8. What is your meaning about the increasing of percentage of GDP for the development aid?
Suggest according to your opinion suited methodology (methods, procedures and techniques) of the research focused on the topic:

„Impacts of low education level on rural development in your country“

Write about 15 sentences with explanation of your choice.
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Homework No. 2

- Suggest according to your opinion suited methodology (methods, procedures and techniques) of the research focused on the topic:

  „Impacts of low education level on rural development in your country“

- ...basically...For example:
  - Methodology: Quantitative Research
  - Type of Procedure: Statistical
  - Technique: Questionnaire

- Write about 15 sentences with explanation of your choice.
THANK YOU FOR ATTENTION
AND
HAVE A GOOD DAY
SEE YOU LATER