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Principles of Research Method

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Quiz #1

Question 1: Explain the steps in the research process. Note: This problem may be easier to write in a bulleted fashion (versus a paragraph). For example,

Step 1: Identify a Topic - This step is where, As educators, we are interested in how we might help students understand and avoid plagiarism.

Step 2: Find, Read, and Evaluate Past Research - This step is where, We found an article by Schuetze (2004) that demonstrated that a brief homework assignment can help reduce plagiarism.

Step 3: Refine Topic and Develop a Hypothesis- This step is where, The study by Schuetze (2004) started us thinking about what we already do in our Research Methods and Analysis class. We give a homework assignment early in the semester to assess students' knowledge of plagiarism, and we then discuss issues of plagiarism in class and also have those students who did not do well on the assignment meet with one of our teaching assistants. We also always choose a research topic for the semester and students do several studies based on this topic throughout the semester. There is research evidence that such a themed-methods course allows for deeper understanding of material (Marek, Christopher, & Walker, 2004). Based on this past research, we hypothesized that students who were in a plagiarism-themed research course would demonstrate better knowledge of plagiarism and would have better paraphrasing skills that would help them avoid plagiarism than students who were in a research course with a different theme.

Step 4: Design the Study- This step is where, Ideally, we would do an experiment to show that the plagiarism-themed course caused improvements in students' knowledge and skills. However, this was not practical or ethical because we cannot randomly assign students to class. Instead, we did a quasi-experiment, which is a design that includes some-but not all-of the procedures for an experiment. We compared students from one semester when we chose plagiarism as our theme to students from another semester when we chose a different theme for the course. We manipulated the theme for the course, but did not randomly assign. Thus, we have some characteristics of an experiment but not all of them.

Step 5: Carry Out the Study- This step is where, Our participants were students who signed up for the course. All the students received the plagiarism homework at the beginning of the semester and soon afterwards all the students received instruction and one-on-one feedback as needed. Throughout the semester the students in the plagiarism-themed course did a variety of assignments on the topic of plagiarism, including an attitude analysis, descriptive study, and experiment. Students in the non plagiarism themed course did the same assignments but had gender stereotypes as their course theme. All the students did another plagiarism assignment at the end of the semester.

Step 6: Analyze the Data- This step is where, We compared the first and second plagiarism homework assignments for those in the plagiarism-themed course with those in the non-plagiarism-themed course. We found that those who were in the plagiarism-themed course showed more improvement on the homework assignment than those in the non-plagiarism-themed course.

Step 7: Communicate Results- This step is where, We wrote up a report based on our study and submitted it for publication to the journal Teaching of Psychology. Several reviewers and the editor of the journal gave us feedback, and we went through many revisions based on this

feedback. The article was accepted for publication and appeared in print in 2011. It is now part of the larger body of research on the topic of plagiarism. Other researchers can integrate the knowledge gained from the study, critique and improve upon the method, and build on the findings in their own research studies. Both an early version and the final publication version of this paper appear in Appendix B.

Question 2: Explain the difference between scholarly versus popular sources. Provide an example of each. Finally, which of the two should be more commonly used by you in developing your thesis and why?

Scholarly works: A work designed to advance knowledge in a field, written by someone with expertise in that field for others with knowledge of the field, that cites and builds upon other scholarly sources.

Example:

- The goal of the work is to advance knowledge and scientific study in the field.
- The authors) have expertise in the field.
- . The work is written for an audience with knowledge in the field, as opposed to the general public.
- The work builds upon other scholarly sources that are clearly cited.

Popular works: A work designed to entertain or educate and that was written for those who do not necessarily have any knowledge in the topic area.

Example:

Wikipedia and other websites, online blogs, educational pamphlets or fact sheets, some books including textbooks, and articles in newspapers or magazines--including Psychology Today and Scientific American.

Personally for me Scholarly works would most likely be used by me because if the fact they have more accurate information.

Question 3: Briefly describe the purpose of each section in a primary research article.

Introduction

i. Introduce the Topic and Why It Is Important

ii. Review Past Research

Explain what we know about the topic from past research

- Identify what we do not know about the topic due to gaps or limitations of past research

iii. Focus on the Current Study

- Explain how the current study will fill gaps or address limitations in past research

- Identify study hypotheses or research questions

Method

Explain the Method Used to Test the Hypotheses or Help

Answer the Research Questions

Results

Explain the Results of Analyses Conducted to Test Hypothesis or Answer Research Questions

Discussion

1. Summarize Key Results

- If there were clear hypotheses, indicate if the results support or do not support the hypotheses

ii. Put Results Into Context

- Explain how results fit or do not fit with past research
- Identify limitations of the study

iii. Identify Directions for Future Research

-Suggest how future research might address the limitations of the study or expand upon the results of the study

Question 4: Compare and contrast reliability and validity.

Reliability of a study: How consistent the results are across similar studies.

The validity of a study refers to how accurate the results are and is examined in two ways: internal validity and external validity.

Question 5: What are the four scales of measurement in statistics? Explain each and provide an example of each.

Nominal scales represent categories. Although numbers are used to represent categories within a nominal scale, the numbers have no numerical value.

Ordinal scales represent rankings. This scale of measurement includes numbers that have order so that each number is greater or less than other numbers.

Interval scales are ratings that have both order and equal intervals between values on the scale.

Ratio scales measure quantity. This scale of measurement has the qualities of an interval scale (order and equal intervals) plus it has a true zero.