Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology 9th edition Maxfield Solutions Manual

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Solution and Answer Guide

MICHAEL G. MAXFIELD, EARL R. BABBIE, AMIE SCHUCK, RESEARCH METHODS FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CRIMINOLOGY, 9TH EDITION, © 2025, 9780357763735; CHAPTER 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE INQUIRY

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Review Questions and Exercises 1

REVIEW QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Review the common errors of personal inquiry discussed in this chapter. Search the news and find an article about a crime- or justice-related problem that illustrates one or more of those errors. Discuss how a criminal justice researcher would avoid making that error.

   Solution:
   Students' answers will vary depending on the source selected. The article should accurately demonstrate one of the errors of personal inquiry noted in the text (inaccurate observation, overgeneralization, selective observation, illogical reasoning, ideology, and politics). In their response, students should discuss a safeguard that corresponds to the error found in the article. For instance, if a student found a news article that used a poll with a small sample size to indicate the existence of a trend, the student could argue that the author has made the error of overgeneralization. The safeguard for overgeneralization is using a sufficiently large sample size. The student could propose that the researcher increases the sample size for the study to reduce the chances of overgeneralization in analysis. Students may also include in their response the details in the article that led them to believe an error of personal inquiry was made.

2. Pick a crime- or justice-related problem that you are interested in studying and list the types of questions you would want answered in an exploratory or descriptive research project on that topic.

   Solution:
   Students' answers will vary depending on the topic selected, in tandem with whether they choose an exploratory or descriptive research approach. For example, if a student chose the topic of juvenile delinquency and the descriptive approach, they could ask questions like
   - How many male children are in the juvenile justice system (JJS)? Female?
   - What is the racial composition of children in the JJS?
   - What is the average income of families whose children are in the JJS?

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3. Identify the robbery rate for a city close to your college or university. Briefly discuss examples of explanatory research as they relate to the robbery rate.

   Solution:
   For this exercise, students' answers will depend on the location selected. In taking an explanatory research approach to the robbery rate, most students will provide examples where the research questions center around reasons why the rate is what it is; whether high, low, or in-between. This could include questions of geography, population, and socioeconomic status, among others.

4. Often, things we think are true and supported by considerable experience and evidence turn out not to be true, or at least not true with the certainty we expected. Criminal justice seems especially vulnerable to this phenomenon, perhaps because crime and criminal justice policy are so often the subjects of mass and popular media attention. If news stories, movies, and television shows all point to growing gang- or drug-related violence, it is easy to assume that these are real problems identified by systematic study. Choose a criminal justice topic or claim that's currently prominent in news stories or entertainment. Using Google Scholar or some other bibliographic tool, search the Internet for two research studies that examine the topic in systematic ways described in this chapter. Briefly summarize the studies' findings.

   Solution:
   Students' responses will vary depending on the topic choice and their selection of corresponding research studies. Answers should include a brief summary of each study's findings. Students may also discuss how these findings either support or refute common beliefs about criminal justice topics in mass and popular media.

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Instructor Manual

Michael G. Maxfield, Earl R. Babbie, Amie Schuck, Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology, 9th Edition, © 2025, 9780357763735; Chapter 1: An Introduction to Criminal Justice Inquiry

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Purpose and Perspective of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce students to the variety of ways people learn about their world and the mistakes common to these methods. The chapter presents students with the differences between social scientific inquiry and other manners of learning and knowing, as well as methods to avoid common errors in inquiry. The chapter explains the process of research topic selection, how to conduct a literature view, and how to write a research proposal.

Learning Objectives

The following objectives are addressed in this chapter:

1. Explain why knowledge of research methods is valuable to criminal justice professionals.
2. Describe the different ways we know things.
3. Distinguish inquiry as a natural human activity from inquiry through systematic empirical research.
4. Recognize that much of our knowledge is based on agreement rather than on direct experience.
5. Explain how tradition and authority are important sources of knowledge.
6. Describe the role of experience and systematic observation in criminal justice research.
7. Recognize that social science guards against, but does not prevent, political beliefs from affecting research findings.
8. Distinguish among research designed to explore, describe, explain, and apply.
9. Explain how to design a research project.
10. Be able to conduct a review of research literature.
11. Describe how to write a research proposal.

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What's New in This Chapter

The following elements are improvements in this chapter from the previous edition:

- References and examples have been updated.

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CHAPTER OUTLINE

The following outline organizes activities (including any existing discussion questions in PowerPoints or other supplements) and assessments by chapter (and therefore by topic), so that you can see how all the content relates to the topics covered in the text.

Sexual Assault in Jails and Prisons (LO 01.01, PPT Slide 4-5)

a. Sexual Assaults in Jails and Prisons
    i. The Prison Rape Elimination Act became law in 2003 in response to reports of sexual assault in prisons and jails.
    ii. The Bureau of Justice Statistics found that between 2016 and 2018There were 4,895 substantiated incidents of inmate sexual victimization of which
        (1) 54% were perpetrated by an inmate
        (2) 46% were perpetrated by a staff member
        (3) Sexual harassment was the most common offense
        (4) Legal action was pursued against the staff perpetrators in 38.1% of the incidents involving sexual misconduct and 4.5% involving sexual harassment
    iii. Nancy La Vigne and other researchers from the Urban Institute (2011) evaluated the supervision and training used in three facilities. From their findings, they were able to make recommendations for improvement and a method for self-study. This is an example of how researchers seek to expand their understanding of a problem and then experiment with different methods for improvement.

I. Introduction (LO 01.01 & 01.02, PPT Slide 6)
    a. Why Study Research Methods? (LO 01.01 & 01.02, PPT Slide 7)
        i. Criminal Justice professionals are both consumers and producers of research.
            (1) Criminal justice professionals need to understand research findings and how to apply them to their own department.
            (2) Many criminal justice agencies require the production of research
                (a) To assess current policy or practice
                (b) To develop a problem-solving approach
                (c) To encourage or maintain funding
        ii. Objectives of the text
            (1) Be a consumer of research
            (2) Help to produce research

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II. What Is This Book About? (LO 01.02, 01.03, & 01.04, PPT Slide 8)
    a. Two Realities (LO 01.02, 01.03, & 01.04, PPT Slide 9)
        i. Experiential reality are the things we know from direct experience.
        ii. Agreement reality are the things we consider real because we have been told they are real, and everyone agrees.
        iii. Example: The *Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment* revealed the agreement reality that simply increasing patrols decreased crime was misleading.
    b. The Role of Science (LO 01.02, 01.03, & 01.04, PPT Slide 10)
        i. Empirical research: the production of knowledge based on experience or observation.
        ii. As a general rule, an assertion must have both logical and empirical support.
        iii. Epistemology is the science of knowing; methodology is the science of finding out.
        iv. Criminal justice methodology is the primary focus of the text.

III. Personal Human Inquiry (LO 01.05 & 01.06, PPT Slide 11)
    a. Personal Human Inquiry (LO 01.05 & 01.6, PPT Slide 12)
        i. We generally recognize that future circumstances are somehow caused or conditioned by present ones.
        ii. We recognize that such patterns of cause and effect are probabilistic in nature: the effects occur more often when the causes occur than when the causes are absent.
        iii. The goal is to understand why certain things are related, why patterns occur, to enable us to make more accurate predictions.
    b. Tradition (LO 01.05 & 01.06, PPT Slide 13)
        i. These are the things that “everybody knows.”
        ii. By accepting this knowledge, we are spared the task of starting from scratch in our search for regularities and understanding.
        iii. It can also hinder human inquiry because we often take such understanding as “truth.”
        iv. Example: Tradition is the understanding that driving on the left side of the road in the United States is dangerous.
    c. Authority (LO 01.05 & 01.06, PPT Slide 13)
        i. Trusting in the judgments of individuals who have special training, expertise, and credentials in a matter.
        ii. Questioning authority may be difficult but is necessary.
        iii. Inquiry can be greatly hindered by the legitimate authorities who err within their own special province.
        iv. Example: You are more likely to believe a judge regarding your driver’s license suspension than your parents.
        v. Both tradition and authority provide us with a starting point for our own inquiry, but they may lead us to start at the wrong point or push us in the wrong direction.

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IV. Errors in Personal Human Inquiry (LO 01.07, PPT Slide 15)
    a. Inaccurate Observation (LO 01.07, PPT Slide 16)
        i. Observation is the keystone of inquiry.
        ii. We must know *what* before we can explain *why*.
        iii. People are notoriously sloppy observers.
        iv. The use of simple and complex measurement devices safeguards against inaccurate observation.
    b. Overgeneralization (LO 01.07, PPT Slide 17)
        i. The tendency to overgeneralize is probably greatest when there is pressure to reach general understanding.
        ii. Researchers may falsely assume that a few similar events are evidence of a general pattern.
        iii. Researchers may replicate the study to see whether similar results are obtained in each case.
        iv. Replication results either support the original findings or cause us to question the accuracy of an earlier study.
    c. Selective Observation (LO 01.07, PPT Slide 18)
        i. Once a particular pattern is developed, researchers can be tempted to pay attention to future events and situations that correspond with the pattern and ignore those that don't.
        ii. To protect against this, researchers often specify in advance the number and kind of observations to be made before marking a conclusion to a particular project.
    d. Illogical Reasoning (LO 01.07, PPT Slide 19)
        i. We all use illogical reasoning at some point.
            (1) "The exception proves the rule."
            (2) "Gambler's fallacy"—A string of good or bad luck will be followed by the opposite.
        ii. To safeguard against illogical reasoning in research, systems of logic should be used consciously and explicitly.
    e. Ideology and Politics (LO 01.07, PPT Slide 20)
        i. Criminologist Samuel Walker compares ideological bias in criminal justice research to theology, saying that "faith trumps over facts."
        ii. It is important to exclude ideology and bias from our methodology, analysis, and interpretation.
    f. To Err Is Human (LO 01.07, PPT Slide 21)
        i. Social science inquiry differs from causal inquiry in that it is a conscious activity and more carefully constructed.

V. Purposes of Research (LO 01.08, PPT Slide 24)
    a. Exploration (LO 01.08, PPT Slide 25)
        i. Used to examine an issue or policy about which little is known
            (1) Collect data on some measure to serve as a baseline for later comparisons
            (2) Useful when some type of policy change is being considered

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ii. It may be simple or complex and can use a variety of methods.
iii. Examples include research on bullying and impact of cannabis legalization.

b. Description (LO 01.08, PPT Slide 26)
   i. Descriptive research is used to observe and describe the scope of the crime problem or policy response, typically performed by a researcher or public official.
   ii. Descriptive studies are often concerned with counting or documenting observations. Following exploration, we often want to know the problem's frequency, prevalence, degree, or scope.
   iii. Examples include the US Census and the Uniform Crime Report.

c. Explanation (LO 01.08, PPT Slide 27)
   i. Explanatory research attempts to answer "why?"
      (1) Why have we seen a certain change in scope?
      (2) Why does a certain problem exist?
   ii. Examples: Why does Colorado have the highest auto theft rate in the nation? Why do some people believe that police are doing a good job while other people do not?

d. Application (LO 01.08, PPT Slide 28)
   i. Applied research stems from a need for specific facts and findings with policy implications.
   ii. Two major forms of applied research are
      (1) **Evaluation research,** which in its most basic form involves comparing the goals of a program with the results.
      (2) **Policy/problem analysis,** which is primarily focused on future events, in an attempt to anticipate future consequences of alternative actions.

VI. How to Design a Research Project (LO 01.09, PPT Slide 30)

a. Research design requires planning several stages, but stages do not always occur in same sequence.

b. The Research Process (LO 01.09, PPT Slide 31–32)
   i. One of the most difficult parts of the research process is framing your interest into a research question.
      (1) This often requires revision or clarification of research problems as you learn more about a topic.
   ii. Researchers should begin with their own experiences and observations, and then learn more about the existing research.
   iii. The steps of the research process include
      (1) Conceptualization: Specify all of the concepts of the study and your choice of method.
      (2) Operationalization: Create concrete steps, or operations, used to measure specific concepts.
      (3) Population and sampling: Decide who or what is being studied.

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(4) Observations: Collect empirical data.
(5) Analysis: Draw conclusions from the data.
(6) Application: Apply conclusions to original inquiries.

VII. Reviewing the Literature (LO 01.10, PPT Slide 33)
  a. Reviewing the Literature (LO 01.10, PPT Slide 34)
    i. A research project begins with a review of the literature.
    ii. Research should be seen as an extension of what has previously been learned about a particular topic.
    iii. It will tell you what's already known and what is unknown.
    iv. Conducting a literature review has become both much easier and much more challenging with the expansion of information technology and search tools on the Internet.
  b. General Strategies (LO 01.10, PPT Slide 35)
    i. Cautionary strategies for use in literature review
      (1) Keep notes of resources as you view them.
      (2) Begin with book or article on your topic and expand from there.
      (3) Use Google Scholar to expand upon search using author or title keyword.
      (4) College or university librarians are helpful resources.
  c. How to Read Scholarly Research (LO 01.10, PPT Slides 36–37)
    i. Reading a journal article
      (1) The abstract will give details as to the methods used and major findings.
      (2) Read the summary and conclusions of the article.
      (3) Skim the article.
        (a) Focus on headings, tables, and graphs.
      (4) Carefully read the entire article.
      (5) Ask for help if you do not understand the article.
    ii. Reading a book-length report
      (1) Read the preface—It will indicate relevance to your study.
      (2) Skim the book. Pay attention to the organization, headings, tables, graphs, and major findings. Take notes during this process.
      (3) If you decide to read the book, repeat the following process for each chapter:
        (a) Read opening and concluding paragraphs for the summary.
        (b) Skim the whole chapter.
        (c) Read chapter more deliberately while taking notes.
      (4) It is OK to skip portions of a book—only a few portions may be relevant to your research

VIII. The Research Proposal (LO 01.11, PPT Slide 38)
  a. The Research Proposal (LO 01.11, PPT Slide 39)

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i. The proposal describes the research activities planned and includes a budget and timeline.
ii. Agencies may have specific requirements for a proposal.
iii. Almost every proposal includes some basic elements.

b. Elements of a Research Proposal (LO 01.11, PPT Slide 40–41)
i. Problem or Objective
(1) What exactly do you want to study?
(2) Why is it worth studying?
(3) How does it contribute to understanding of crime or policy?
ii. Literature Review: Summarizes what others have said about your topic.
iii. Research Questions:
(1) What specific questions will the research try to answer?
(2) What new information do you expect to find?
(3) Frame your questions in the context of other research findings.
iv. Subjects for Study: Describe whom or what will be studied in order to collect data.
v. Measurement: Identify key variables in the study and exactly how they will be defined and measured.
vi. Data Collection Methods: Establish how the data will be collected for the study.
(1) Criminal justice research often includes more than one method.
vii. Analysis: Spell out the purpose and logic of analysis.
viii. References: List the materials consulted and cited in proposal.
ix. Schedule: Provide a schedule for various stages of research.
x. Budget: Large, expensive projects include budget categories such as personnel, equipment, travel, etc.

IX. Knowing Through Experience: Summing Up and Looking Ahead (LO 01.11, PPT Slide 42-43)
a. Summing Up and Looking Ahead
i. The chapter has introduced the foundation of criminal justice research: empirical research or learning through experience;
ii. Considered different purposes of research;
iii. Advised on how to design a research project; and,
iv. Introduced measurement and interpretation.

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