

Charles Hwang – SOCL 101-004

REQUIRED – upload to SAKAI by 11 PM 1/26/20

Watch the following 10-minute videos and answer the questions below.

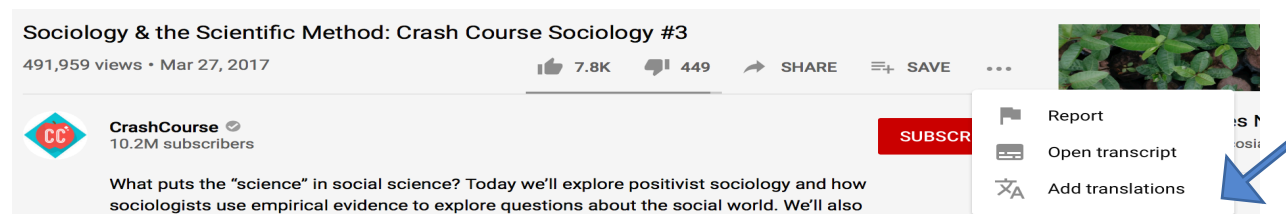
Sociology & the Scientific Method: Crash Course Sociology #3

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlwyNldgJBE>

Sociology Research Methods: Crash Course Sociology #4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwhK-iEyXYA>

HINT: YOU CAN USE the closed captioning function and see a transcript by clicking on the 3 dots and selecting “transcript”



Sociology & the Scientific Method: Crash Course Sociology #3

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZlwyNldgJBE>

Questions:

1) What is meant by “positivism”? (Define positivism):

Positivism is a philosophy that claims that “phenomena can be studied through direct observation, and that these observations can be pulled together into theories or facts” to help sociologists understand how the world works. This philosophy uses more quantitative data than the two alternatives.

2) What is meant by “empirical evidence”? (Define “empirical evidence”):

According to the video, empirical evidence is “verifiable information that is collected in a systematic way”. This can be through things like scientific experiments or observations.

3) What are the alternatives to positivism as a type of sociological inquiry? Explain.

a) Interpretive sociology – “study of society that focuses on the meanings that people attach to their social world”. This philosophy argues that sociology should focus more on the group of subjects and their perspectives and experiences rather than quantitative data.

b) Critical sociology – “study of society that focuses on the need for social change”. This philosophy incorporates values, defined as “ideas a person has about what’s good, and the attitudes they hold toward how the world works”, into its research because the values that a sociologist holds may draw them to research that particular topic.

4) What are the two types of data sociologists work with? Identify, define, and provide an example of each from either “Teenage Wasteland” by Gaines or “The Intersection of Biography and History” by Romero.

- a) Type and Definition: Quantitative data – data that are represented numerically
Example from Gaines or Romero: “An estimated 400,000 adolescents attempt suicide each year” (Gaines 9).
- b) Type and Definition: Qualitative data – data that cannot be represented numerically
Example from Gaines or Romero: “some kids do it violently: drowning, hanging, slashing, jumping, or crashing. Firearms are still the most popular” (Gaines 9).

5) What is meant by the “Hawthorne Effect”?

The Hawthorne Effect occurs when a group of participants or subjects change how they behave because they are aware that a researcher or group of researchers is observing them.

Sociology Research Methods: Crash Course Sociology #4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwhK-iEyXYA>

Questions:

1) What is a variable?

A variable is “something that can take on many different values” and represents some trait or statistic being measured. There are often many different variables in an experiment or observational study.

2) What is an independent variable?

An independent variable is a variable that researchers initially believe “is affecting the change in how people describe themselves.” This variable is often the one that is observed or recorded.

3) What is a dependent variable?

A dependent variable is a variable that is affected by changes in the independent variable. This variable often appears in the results of an experiment or observational study.

4) What is a hypothesis?

A hypothesis is “a statement of a possible relationship between two variables.” A hypothesis forms the basis for an experiment or observational study.

5) Provide an example of a hypothesis, and identify which is the independent variable and which is dependent variable.

A possible hypothesis for an experiment could be as such: “If someone’s commute time is greater, then their average annual income tends to be lower.” In this experiment, the independent variable is the commute time and the dependent variable is the average annual income.

6) What are the 4 main ways sociologists collect data?

The four main ways in which sociologists collect data are through “experiments, surveys, participant observation, and existing resources.”

6b) Is “informed consent” necessary for all? Explain.

Informed consent is necessary for all data-collection procedures that involve subjects or participants to ensure that the procedure is moral and ethical and that no data is being collected against a person’s will. However, in a participant observation, only the participants being observed need to provide informed consent, rather than everyone that they interact with.

7) What is the difference between inductive and deductive logic?

Inductive logic uses collected data and observations to build a theory, while deductive logic uses an existing theory and collected data and observations are used to test the theory.

8) What is meant by “correlation does not equal causation”? How does the presenter illustrate this idea? What example does she use? Explain.

The phrase “correlation does not equal causation” means that having a strong correlation, or relationship between two variables, does not directly imply that one of these variables is causing the other. The presenter illustrates this by noting “murder rates tend to be high when ice cream sales are high”. However, there is no practical basis that ice cream sales cause murder or vice versa. She notes that there is a third variable, high temperature, which affects both murder rates and ice cream sales in the same way.