2.3 Questionnaires and Social Surveys: Test Pack

AQA 8192 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Use sociological vocabulary and name sociologists where you can.

1 A question that gives respondents a fixed list of possible answers to choose from is called a...

- ☐ A) open question
- ☐ B) closed question
- ☐ C) leading question
- ☐ D) pilot question

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Define what sociologists mean by 'social desirability bias' in questionnaire research.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 Sociologists try to avoid a particular type of poorly-worded question in a questionnaire. Explain what is meant by a 'leading question' and why it can reduce validity.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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4 Not every respondent sent a questionnaire returns it. Explain why this can make questionnaire findings less representative.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 State one criticism of using a Likert scale (e.g. 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree') to measure attitudes.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.3 Questionnaires and Social Surveys: Test Pack

Question 1

B (closed question) **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

identifies social desirability bias as the tendency for respondents to give answers that present themselves in a positive light rather than answers that are strictly true (oe) **B1**

development, e.g. under-reporting embarrassing behaviour or over-reporting socially approved behaviour, such as exercising regularly **B1**

Answer: Social desirability bias is the tendency for respondents to give answers that present themselves in a positive light rather than answers that are strictly true, for example under-reporting embarrassing behaviour or over-reporting socially approved behaviour.

Question 3

identifies a leading question as one phrased in a way that suggests, or hints at, the answer the researcher wants **B1**

development, e.g. a question such as 'Do you agree that X is a serious problem?' pushes the respondent toward agreeing **B1**

identifies the effect: this reduces validity because the respondent's answer no longer reflects their genuine, independent view **B1**

further point, e.g. well-designed questionnaires use neutral wording to avoid this **B1**

Answer: A leading question is phrased in a way that suggests or hints at the answer the researcher wants, for example 'Do you agree that X is a serious problem?', which pushes respondents toward agreeing. This reduces validity because the answer no longer reflects the respondent's genuine, independent view, so well-designed questionnaires use neutral wording.

Question 4

identifies that those who respond may differ systematically from those who do not, e.g. being more interested in the topic or more literate **B1**

development, e.g. the achieved sample may then over-represent certain types of people **B1**

further point, e.g. the researcher cannot know the views of the non-respondents, since they have no data from them **B1**

concludes this reduces how far the findings can be generalised to the wider target population **B1**

Answer: Those who respond to a questionnaire may differ systematically from those who do not, for example being more interested in the topic or more literate, so the achieved sample may over-represent certain types of people. Since the researcher has no data from non-respondents, the findings cannot safely be generalised to the wider target population.

Question 5

identifies a genuine criticism, e.g. it forces an answer into fixed categories that may not capture a respondent's true, more nuanced feeling **B1**

brief development, e.g. respondents may cluster around the neutral middle option rather than committing to a real view **B1**

Answer: A Likert scale forces an answer into fixed categories that may not capture a respondent's true, more nuanced feeling, and respondents may cluster around the neutral middle option rather than committing to a genuine view.

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