
EXAMPLE ASSIGNMENT #4: Methodology, Part III

Hypothesis: State your hypothesis (hypotheses) here. If you have more than one hypothesis, please number them (i.e., Hypothesis₁, Hypothesis₂, Hypothesis₃, and so on).

V. Procedure

A. The method of data collection for the present study, with regard to the juvenile data, will be via document analysis of juvenile domestic and/or family violence probation or court case files from Santa Clara and Contra Costa counties.

1. A coding form will be developed that will capture the data relevant to the demographic, independent, dependent, and background variables.
2. Research assistants will be responsible for providing their own transportation; however, research grant funds will be used for reimbursement purposes based upon reported miles each month.
3. Research assistants will be responsible for documenting time spent reviewing files each day a site is visited, and will submit time sheets each month. Research grant funds will be used for stipend purposes based on reported work hours each month.
4. Probation and/or court case files will be reviewed on-site at Juvenile Probation Offices in both Santa Clara County and Contra Costa County by trained graduate students working as research assistants on the project.
5. Prior to beginning data collection, research assistants will be required to meet with the Principal Investigator (PI) for a training session which will cover: (1) proper procedures for accessing and reviewing files, (2) a review of study variables, (3) documentation of data, (4) tracking of data collection progress, (5) submission of data, and (6) documentation and submission of travel and work time.
6. Data collection will take place over the course of 2 years, consisting of multiple site visits until all relevant files have been reviewed.
7. Each month, data will be transmitted electronically to the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) in Williamsburg, Virginia for data cleaning and data entry. Following the completion of all data collection, the data will be analyzed by a research assistant at NCSC and in Santa Clara County (i.e., a graduate student at San Jose State University, San Jose, California).
8. Following the collection of all juvenile data, adult criminal records (i.e. printed reports) corresponding to the juvenile cases will be reviewed to document adult recidivist offenses. The same data submission procedures will be followed as described for the submission of juvenile data to NCSC.

B. The data for each of the variables will be collected in the following manner:

1. Independent Variable: Juvenile delinquency court - **REQUIRED**
 - a. As Santa Clara County (SC) corresponds with a specialized juvenile domestic and family violence court, and Contra Costa County (CC) corresponds with a general jurisdiction juvenile court, check boxes

Please note: The organization of this example **Procedure** section does not exactly coincide with the layout of the assignment itself; however, the content does meet all of the required elements outlined in Assignment #4. Each person's **Procedure** section will vary in organization; however, all must meet the content requirements.

will be provided on the coding form with the options of either SS or CC.

- b. The independent variable will be measured at the nominal level (i.e., categorical)
- c. Research assistants will check the appropriate box depending on which county they are collecting data

2.

Background Variables (primary) - **REQUIRED**

a. Gender

- 1) Check boxes corresponding to either Male or Female will be provided on the coding form
- 2) Gender will be obtained from official police reports within the probation or court files and/or other official documentation specifying such information
- 3) Gender will be measured at the nominal level (categorical)

b. Ethnicity

- 1) Check boxes corresponding to following ethnicities/races will be provided on the coding form
 - a) Caucasian
 - b) African American
 - c) Hispanic
 - d) Asian
 - e) Other (with a line to specify)
- 2) Ethnicity/Race will be obtained from official police reports within the probation or court files and/or other official documentation specifying such information
- 3) Ethnicity/Race will be measured at the nominal level (categorical)

c. Age (via Date of Birth)

- 1) A place will be provided on the coding form for recording the juvenile's date of birth in the mo/dd/yy format
- 2) Date of birth will be obtained from official documentation within the probation or court files
- 3) Age will be measured at the ratio level (continuous)

3.

Background Variables (secondary) - **OPTIONAL**

a. Age at the time of the offense

- 1) A place will be provided on the coding form for recording the age of the juvenile at the time of the offense
- 2) Age at the time of the offense will be obtained from official police reports within the probation or court files and/or other official documentation specifying such information
- 3) Age at the time of the offense will be measured at the ratio level

Please note: As with the **Procedure** section, this portion of the example does not exactly coincide with the assignment itself; however, it does meet all of the content requirements.

The assignment itself only requires details for the variables included in Assignment #1 (i.e., those labeled as **REQUIRED**).

This example; however, includes additional background and dependent measures (which are clearly labeled as **OPTIONAL**). Variables and/or measures labeled as **OPTIONAL** will not be included in Assignment #5 (Data Analysis Plan)

- b. Living situation
 - 1) Check boxes will be provided on the coding form corresponding to answers of “yes”, “no”, “don’t know”, and “not applicable” for the following living situations
 - a) There is no information
 - b) Living at home?
 - c) Living with both mother and father?
 - d) If yes to living with both mother and father, is mother a stepmother?
 - e) If yes to living with both mother and father, is father a stepfather?
 - f) Living with mother only?
 - g) If yes to living with mother only, does mother live with a cohabitating partner
 - h) Living with father only?
 - i) If yes to living father only, does father live with a cohabitating partner?
 - j) Are there other primary caretakers?
 - k) If yes to other primary caretakers, are the caretakers: (check boxes will be provided with options)
 - 2) Living situation will be measured at the nominal level (categorical)
- c. Probation
 - 1) Check boxes will be provided on the coding form with the options of either Informal or Formal
 - 2) The probation variable will be measured at the nominal level (categorical)
 - 3) Research assistants will check the appropriate box based upon official documentation contained within the probation or court file
- d. Out-of-Home Placement
 - 1) Check boxes corresponding to the following out-of-home placement options will be provided on the coding forms
 - a) Group home
 - b) Juvenile hall
 - c) County ranch
 - d) CYA camp
 - e) CYA institution
 - f) Foster care
 - g) Other
 - h) Not applicable if placement not outside home
 - 2) The out-of-home placement variable will be measured at the nominal level (categorical)

- 3) Research assistants will check the appropriate box based upon official documentation contained within the probation or court file
- e. Custody
 - 1) A place will be provided on the coding form to record the number of days the juvenile was held in custody
 - 2) Number of days held in custody will be obtained from official probation officer reports
 - 3) The custody variable will be measured at the ratio level (continuous)
- f. Programs
 - 1) Check boxes corresponding to “yes” or “no” will be provided on the coding form in answer to whether the juvenile was ordered to complete an anger management or domestic violence program
 - 2) The programs variable will be measured at the nominal level (categorical)
 - 3) Research assistants will check the appropriate box based upon official documentation contained within the probation or court file
- g. Program Completion
 - 1) Check boxes corresponding to “yes”, “no”, “don’t know”, and “not applicable” will be provided on the coding forms in response whether the juvenile successfully completed any court ordered programs
 - 2) The program completion variable will be measured at the nominal level (categorical)
 - 3) Research assistants will check the appropriate box based upon official documentation contained within the probation or court file
- h. Counseling
 - 1) Check boxes corresponding to “yes”, “no”, “don’t know”, and “not applicable” will be provided on the coding forms in response to whether the juvenile was ordered to participate in individual, group, or family counseling
 - 2) The counseling variable will be measured at the nominal level (categorical)
 - 3) Research assistants will check the appropriate box based upon official documentation contained within the probation or court file
4. Dependent Variable: Level of recidivism (to measure the dependent variable, data will be collected for three primary measures pertaining to juvenile recidivism and adult recidivism) - **REQUIRED**
 - a. Number of probation violations related to a prior juvenile domestic or family violence offense

- b. Number of probation revocations related to a prior juvenile domestic or family violence offense
 - c. Number of recidivist arrests for juvenile domestic or family violence offenses
 - 1) Each of the questions related to the dependent variable will be measured at the ratio level (i.e., the actual number)
 - 2) Research assistants will count and record the actual number of occurrences for each of the six questions related to the dependent variable
5. Adjunct (secondary) Dependent Measures - **OPTIONAL**
- a. Number of convictions for juvenile domestic or family violence offenses
 - b. Number of adult arrests for domestic or family violence offenses
 - c. Number of adult convictions for domestic or family violence offenses
 - 1) Each of the questions related to the dependent variable will be measured at the ratio level (i.e., the actual number)
 - 2) Research assistants will count and record the actual number of occurrences for each of the six questions related to the dependent variable

VI. Data Collection Instrument(s)

Refer to the example surveys, coding forms, and your textbook for guidance. Example surveys and coding forms will be posted on the web site soon. The data collection form(s) you use will go on a separate page and/or pages. The measure(s) you use must be in “ready to go” format, meaning that it (or they) are properly formatted in such a manner that you could use them if you were to collect data for your study.