

RES240 Social Research Design and Data Collection Methods

3rd and 4th quarters, Sophomore

Instructors	ITO ISAMU, TANAKA YUKITAKA
Style of Class	Lecture
Number of Credits	2
Day and Period	Monday, period 3

Course Description

This course deals with methods, practices, and points to note in survey-based social research using questionnaires, covering the stages of: (1) determining a topic, (2) designing the survey, (3) implementing the survey, (4) organizing the survey data, (5) aggregating and analyzing the data, and (6) producing and publishing reports. The main topics addressed include: clarifying points of interest, developing research questions into survey items, determining subjects and methods, approaches and methods in sampling, producing questionnaires and questions, distributing and collecting questionnaires, organizing and analyzing survey data, expressing findings in text and figures, and ethics of social research.

ITO ISAMU (10 classes): After acquiring a basic understanding of the position of surveys in social research, students will learn general, standard approaches and techniques in relation to the topics given above, in line with each stage in research from planning and design through to publication of reports.

TANAKA YUKITAKA (5 classes): Using actual examples from urban community research, students will pursue more concrete, real-life studies of such matters as how to plan and design questionnaire surveys, points to note in implementation, ways of deriving findings, and developing relationships with survey locations and collaborators.

Course Objectives

- Gain a basic understanding of survey-based social research using questionnaires.
- Understand the significance and roles of empirical survey research in the social sciences

Prerequisites

- Introduction to Research I
- Introductory Statistics
- Introduction to Global and Community Studies
- Introduction to Sociology

Class Materials

Textbook: Otani Shinsuke et al., *Shin shakaichosa eno apurochi* (New Approaches to Social Research), Minerva Shobo, 2013.

Course Method

Classes are conducted in lecture format, but in order to avoid one-way teaching, all students will be required to submit a short memo on their thoughts in each class.

Evaluation/Assessment

Grades will be determined by reference to three types of submissions: (1) memos submitted in each class; (2) mid-term test; (3) final report.

Grading

- Attitude to learning (1 above): 20%
- Mid-term test (2): 30%
- Final report (3): 50%

Course Schedule

Week 1: Orientation and introduction

Explanation of course structure, format, and grading methods

Introduction: Complementarity of empirical research (surveys) and sociological concepts/theories

Week 2: Types and methods of social research

Positioning of research using questionnaires; structured interviews and semi-structured interviews

Week 3: Setting a research topic

Importance of problem orientation; clarifying research aims and significance, developing research questions, dialogue with previous research, methods and practicalities of literature and information searches

Week 4: Survey design (1)

From research questions to survey items; determining research subjects and methods; approaches and methods in sampling; the meaning of cases in case studies

Week 5: Survey design (2)

Producing questionnaires and questions; setting answer options; preliminary text, etc.

Week 6: Survey implementation

Generating subject lists; questionnaire distribution and collection methods; survey guidelines; survey implementation: rules and etiquette for interviews

Week 7: Organizing and analyzing survey data

Organizing survey data (editing, coding, data cleaning, etc.); analyzing survey data (dialogue with the data, cross-tabulation, statistical testing, guide to qualitative analysis methods)

Week 8: Producing and publishing reports

Expressing findings in text and figures; points to note for publication; social meanings of social research

Week 9: Ethics of survey research

Respecting the human rights of research subjects; informed consent; prohibitions on data fabrication and plagiarism

Week 10: Mid-term test

Questions on creating questionnaires and approaches to sampling

Week 11: Actual planning and design of questionnaire surveys in urban community research

Introduction and commentary on case studies covering stages from confirmation of survey schedules through to coordination of survey items and generation of questionnaires

Week 12: Points to note when implementing questionnaire surveys in urban community research

Introduction and commentary on case studies covering stages from sampling by browsing the Basic Resident Register, etc. through to reminding, dealing with complaints, and collecting responses

Week 13: Actual ways of deriving findings from surveys in urban community research

Introduction and commentary on case studies in comparative analysis of similar surveys, comparison with actual local conditions, etc., when interpreting the results of analysis

Week 14: Developing relationships with survey locations and collaborators in urban community research

Introduction and commentary on case studies covering preliminary consultation, cooperation at the survey implementation stage, and reporting on findings

Week 15: Wrap-up and final report

Preparation and Follow-up

- Preparation: study the applicable chapters in the textbook and reference materials (approx. 1 hour).
- Follow-up: Revise the class content and identify points requiring clarification (approx. 1 hour).