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PSPA 203 Midterm Examination
Fall 1999

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1. Indicate in detail how the following ^{→ locale} can be operationalized for testing:

^{make it up.} Lower income people from ⁻⁵ southern Mexico ^{unable} more than any other group believe that most members of the Mexican government are dishonest and incompetent. (50 pts)

① First of all, in this hypothesis, we must identify the independent & the dependent variable.

→ dependent variable: what leads southern Mexicans to believe that their government is dishonest and incompetent?

→ independent variable: lower income.

② Then, we must operationalize the [?] 3 variables, i.e. lower income, dishonesty, and incompetence.

→ Lower income: (we assume that low income is a monthly salary consisting of \$250 a month and below)

⑤ • Indicate which income ^{no. in family} bracket best describes your monthly income

- ⁻⁵ a) \$0 - \$100 c) \$251 - \$350 e) \$451 and above
b) \$101 - \$250 d) \$351 - \$450

Here, options a) and b) indicate lower income.

→ Dishonesty: this is a complex variable and contains several dimensions. In this case, two will be taken into consideration:

a) Lying Members of the Mexican

• "The government always tell the truth about the socio-economic situation of the country."

- a) strongly agree d) disagree
b) agree e) strongly disagree
c) somewhat agree

• Do you believe that the President ^{until now} and his administration have kept all the promises they made during the election campaign?

- a) Yes c) somewhat
b) No d) Don't know.

b) Stealing

• "The taxes we pay to the government are aimed at improving the country only". To what extent do you agree

- a) strongly agree d) disagree
b) agree e) strongly disagree

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• "No public official/politician can be said to be taking advantage of his position to improve his financial position."

- a) strongly agree
- b) agree
- c) somewhat agree
- d) disagree
- e) strongly disagree

→ Incompetence: the two dimensions of incompetence that can be used in this case are:

a) incompetence as in not knowing what the problems of the country are

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• Do you think ^{that} government officials understand the problems that the majority of the Mexican people face?

- a) Sometimes
- b) always
- c) Never
- d) Don't know

good

• "Mexican government officials can relate to the hardships that the poor Mexicans face."

- a) strongly agree
- b) agree
- c) somewhat agree
- d) disagree
- e) strongly disagree

b) incompetence as in not having the ^{necessary} skills to perform their job

• "Mexican government officials are the best available people, with the best available skills to perform their job."

- a) strongly agree
- b) agree
- c) somewhat agree
- d) disagree
- e) strongly disagree

• "Officials know exactly what to do to help poor ^{Mexican} people."

- a) strongly agree
- b) agree
- c) somewhat agree
- d) disagree
- e) strongly disagree

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When we come up with these questions, we would distribute some to a limited sample as a pretest, to test for the validity of the questions.

If there's a problem with the questions, we would modify them. We would distribute the questionnaire to a wider sample in order to test our hypothesis. If there's a positive correlation between the variables, our hypothesis is validated, if not it is

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2. Is the following a valid survey questionnaire item—if it is just check it, if not say what is wrong and correct. 10

double barrelled question

After Israeli withdrawal the Lebanese army should move into the occupied zone in South Lebanon and the resistance should withdraw.

1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Don't know

The answers to this question are NOT exhaustive and should be changed. The answers should follow the Likert scale and look like this:

- 1) strongly agree
- 2) agree
- 3) somewhat agree
- 4) disagree
- 5) strongly disagree
- 6) don't know.

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3. State an example of empirical theory. 10

The balance of power theory

nomothetic. look for 2 (approx.) reasons.

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4. If a political scientist was going to research the causes of the Lebanese civil war how would she/he approach the research problem? (this question has nothing to do with survey-methodology or library-research) 10.

One would have to identify what one considers as the necessary & sufficient causes of the war. Also, one would have to test to see which factors were the actual causes. Testing for causation includes the following:

- a) ^{the} cause must precede the effect
- b) there must be an empirical relationship between the variables (ie between the cause and effect)
- c) correlation between the 2 variables (cause and effect) must NOT be explained by a 3rd variable.

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5. To understand how and why people's attitudes might change what methodology could be used? Describe briefly. 10

It would certainly have to be the longitudinal method. This would allow us to follow up on people's attitudes over a certain period of time. From among the methods used under the longitudinal method, we could use the panel study because it ensures more detail, since we would be dealing with the same group of people over a specific period of time.

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6. Furnish two basic assumptions of social science research. (10) use reverse.

- a) that everything that exists can be measured
- b) that ^{our} beliefs & values affect our political behavior

↳ some problems of the world
↳ people don't have free will
we can't know causes

although there's a risk that people might drop out