Comprehensive Exam Reading List


*Criminology, 30*(1), 47-88.


Practice Comprehensive Exam Questions

Theory

1) First, explain what criminological theory is, and how it is relevant in criminology and criminal justice. Next, use strain, social learning, and control theories to explain the causes of delinquent behavior or crime. Be sure to describe the features that are unique to each particular theory. Finally, choose one theory to elaborate upon, and explain how the theory has evolved from the beginning of the theoretical tradition.

2) You have been hired by the Department of Justice to conduct a study on a specific crime using (Official statistics (e.g., UCR), victimization surveys (e.g., NCVS), or self-report surveys). Please answer the following questions in detail:
   - First, compare and contrast the three different types of data sources.
   - Second, choose ONE of the following crimes: Robbery, violent sex crimes, homicide, or white-collar crime and discuss which data source is most appropriate for researching the selected crime and why.
   - Last, discuss the limitations for the data sources that you did not choose for the crime you selected.

Methods & Analysis

3) Compare and contrast the limitations and merits of official statistics (e.g. UCR), victimization surveys (e.g. NCVS), and self-report surveys. How would you use these data sources when designing a research study comparing crime in two cities?

4) Describe in detail how you would research a crime problem (your choice) if you were to be supplied with a very large amount of grant funding. In your answer, be sure to describe each of the following: 1) General Method 2) Hypotheses and Research Questions 3) Sample 4) Data Collection Procedures and 5) Analytical Strategy (how you would analyze your data).

5) The multiple OLS regression examines the effects of two or more independent variables on the dependent variable. Provide a summary based on the output below. Please be able to interpret the coefficient for each independent variable in your summary of the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Misdemeanor</td>
<td>9.43*</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Trial</td>
<td>6.22*</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DV = Sentence in Months
IV:
- Misdemeanor (0 = no 1 = yes)
- Type of Trial (0 = plea, 1 = jury trial)
- Alcohol Offense (0 = no, 1 = yes)
- Sex (0 = male, 1 = female)
- Age (left open ended)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol Offense</td>
<td>52.11*</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>-5.03</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.42*</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.042</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05

$R^2 = 0.42^*$