

1.2 Social research questions and data

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS research question 研究问题 • quantitative 定量 • qualitative 定性 • evidence 证据

Objective

Turn a broad social question into an answerable research design and choose data that fits it.

You must be able to:

- write an answerable research question
- distinguish quantitative and qualitative data
- justify a method from the question asked

1 Worked examples

■ Narrow to evidence you can collect

“Is society fair?” is too broad. “Do students at this school spend more on transport than food each week?” is an answerable **research question** 研究问题.

Quantitative 定量 data measure amounts and frequency. **Qualitative** 定性 data explore meanings and experiences. The question chooses the method, not the other way around.

2 Practice

2.1 State which type of data answers “how often?”. [1]

2.2 State which type of data is useful for “how did it feel?”. [1]

2.3 Explain why “Is society fair?” is a weak research question for a short project. [2]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Improve this question: “Do young people use social media too much?” Explain why your version is stronger. [4]

3.2 Recommend a data type for investigating students’ reasons for choosing a club. Justify it. [4]

Solutions

2.1

- Quantitative data.

2.2

- Qualitative data.

2.3

- It has broad, undefined terms such as society and fair.
- It cannot be answered with realistic evidence in a short project.

3.1

- For example: “How many hours per day do Year 11 students at this school use social media?”
- It defines a group, measure, and setting.
- Evidence can be collected within the project.
- The result can answer the stated question.

3.2

- Use qualitative data, such as interviews or open questions.
- Reasons involve personal meanings and explanations.
- Participants can describe their experience in their own words.
- This fits a question asking why rather than how many.