

PSClearn6 - Psychology Research Methods Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

- 1. What is the main difference between simple random sampling and systematic sampling?**
 - A. A chance procedure vs a set interval**
 - B. One is probability-based, the other is nonprobability-based**
 - C. One always yields equal subgroup representation, the other does not**
 - D. One requires more resources**
- 2. What is sampling bias, and why is it a threat to a study?**
 - A. Sampling bias occurs when the sample is not representative; threatens generalizability and validity.**
 - B. Sampling bias occurs when data are collected from multiple sites.**
 - C. Sampling bias occurs when the sample size is too large to manage.**
 - D. Sampling bias occurs when researchers use random sampling improperly.**
- 3. To survey employees, a researcher obtains a list of extensions and selects every 510th person. What sampling technique is this?**
 - A. Simple random sampling**
 - B. Stratified sampling**
 - C. Systematic sampling**
 - D. Cluster sampling**
- 4. What is a key feature that distinguishes a quasi-experimental design from a true experimental design?**
 - A. Lack of random assignment to conditions.**
 - B. A control group is always present.**
 - C. Posttest measurements are never used.**
 - D. Blinding of participants is mandatory.**

- 5. In a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, how are findings integrated?**
- A. Findings are kept separate and reported independently**
 - B. Findings are compared and converged during interpretation**
 - C. Qualitative results are discarded if they conflict with quantitative results**
 - D. Only quantitative results are reported**
- 6. If a researcher samples 6 individuals from group A, 10 from group B, and 4 from group C to reflect their relative sizes, this is an example of which sampling technique?**
- A. Stratified sampling**
 - B. Simple random sampling**
 - C. Cluster sampling**
 - D. Systematic sampling**
- 7. A study observing multitasking in a large lecture hall and then testing recall finds results that reflect typical class behavior. What is the level of authenticity?**
- A. low, because few participants**
 - B. unknown, population not defined**
 - C. moderate, because correlational**
 - D. high, because multitasking observed should reflect typical class**
- 8. Which sampling method involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and sampling from each subgroup using random selection within subgroups?**
- A. Simple random sampling**
 - B. Stratified sampling**
 - C. Cluster sampling**
 - D. Systematic sampling**

- 9. If a researcher wishes to study a population that is hard to locate, which sampling method is generally preferred?**
- A. Purposive sampling**
 - B. Quota sampling**
 - C. Snowball sampling**
 - D. Convenience sampling**
- 10. A researcher is assembling a sample of 100 participants from the undergraduate population on campus. He begins by recruiting Asian American students to match campus representation and stops at 12 Asian American students, then recruits 88 other students. What nonprobability sampling technique is this?**
- A. Convenience sampling**
 - B. Snowball sampling**
 - C. Purposive sampling**
 - D. Quota sampling**

Answers

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- 1. A**
- 2. A**
- 3. C**
- 4. A**
- 5. B**
- 6. A**
- 7. D**
- 8. B**
- 9. C**
- 10. D**

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Explanations

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1. What is the main difference between simple random sampling and systematic sampling?

A. A chance procedure vs a set interval

B. One is probability-based, the other is nonprobability-based

C. One always yields equal subgroup representation, the other does not

D. One requires more resources

The main difference is in how selections are made. Simple random sampling uses a chance procedure where every unit in the sampling frame has an equal probability of being chosen, typically through randomization like a random number generator.

Systematic sampling uses a fixed interval: after picking a random starting point, you select every kth item along the list (for example, every 20th item). This creates a regular, predictable pattern once the starting point is set. Both methods are probability-based, but the mechanism differs—random draws for each selection versus a predetermined skip. Systematic sampling can be efficient and spread out across the list, but it can introduce bias if the list has a hidden pattern that matches the interval. The other statements aren't the defining difference: both are probability-based, neither guarantees equal subgroup representation, and resource needs vary by context rather than by the fundamental method.

2. What is sampling bias, and why is it a threat to a study?

A. Sampling bias occurs when the sample is not representative; threatens generalizability and validity.

B. Sampling bias occurs when data are collected from multiple sites.

C. Sampling bias occurs when the sample size is too large to manage.

D. Sampling bias occurs when researchers use random sampling improperly.

Sampling bias happens when the individuals chosen for a study don't reflect the larger population you want to understand. When certain groups are overrepresented or underrepresented, the results can misrepresent how the whole population would respond, which threatens generalizability beyond the study and can distort conclusions about relationships or effects. For example, surveying only college students to draw conclusions about all adults misses the differences that might exist in other age groups. The other options don't define sampling bias. Collecting data from multiple sites isn't, by itself, sampling bias—it can actually improve representativeness if sites are chosen thoughtfully. A sample that's too large is not a bias issue, just a logistical one. Using random sampling improperly can produce biased results, but that describes a flaw in the procedure, not the fundamental definition of sampling bias itself.

3. To survey employees, a researcher obtains a list of extensions and selects every 510th person. What sampling technique is this?

- A. Simple random sampling**
- B. Stratified sampling**
- C. Systematic sampling**
- D. Cluster sampling**

Systematic sampling uses a fixed interval from an ordered list to select participants. Here, choosing every 510th person from the list of extensions is exactly applying that constant interval. This differs from simple random sampling, where selections are made purely by chance without a set pattern. It's also not stratified sampling, which means sampling within predefined subgroups, nor cluster sampling, which involves sampling whole groups. The approach is efficient and tends to spread selections across the list, but it can introduce bias if there's a hidden pattern in the list that aligns with the interval.

4. What is a key feature that distinguishes a quasi-experimental design from a true experimental design?

- A. Lack of random assignment to conditions.**
- B. A control group is always present.**
- C. Posttest measurements are never used.**
- D. Blinding of participants is mandatory.**

Random assignment to conditions is what separates a true experimental design from a quasi-experimental one. When participants are randomly allocated, each person has an equal chance of ending up in any condition, helping ensure the groups are comparable at the start and reducing the influence of unknown variables. This randomization is what allows stronger causal inferences about the effect of the manipulation. In a quasi-experimental design, random assignment isn't used, so the groups may differ on important factors before the treatment. Those preexisting differences can account for observed effects, making causal claims weaker. Other features described in the choices can occur in both designs. A control or comparison group can be present in quasi-experiments, and posttest measurements can be used in either type of study. Blinding participants is not a requirement of either design and is more about reducing bias in specific contexts.

5. In a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, how are findings integrated?

- A. Findings are kept separate and reported independently**
- B. Findings are compared and converged during interpretation**
- C. Qualitative results are discarded if they conflict with quantitative results**
- D. Only quantitative results are reported**

In this design, qualitative and quantitative data are collected at roughly the same time and analyzed separately, then brought together during interpretation to see how the results fit together. The goal is to compare the findings and converge them at the interpretation stage, so you can see where the two strands reinforce each other, offer complementary insights, or reveal discrepancies that need explanation. This integration during interpretation provides a more complete understanding than either method alone. Keeping findings separate and reporting them independently misses the integration step. Discarding qualitative results when they conflict with quantitative ones ignores the purpose of mixed methods, which is to explain and understand discrepancies rather than drop one side. Reporting only quantitative results neglects the qualitative perspective that can enrich interpretation.

6. If a researcher samples 6 individuals from group A, 10 from group B, and 4 from group C to reflect their relative sizes, this is an example of which sampling technique?

- A. Stratified sampling**
- B. Simple random sampling**
- C. Cluster sampling**
- D. Systematic sampling**

Dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups (strata) and drawing samples from each in proportion to the strata's size is proportional stratified sampling. Here, treating each group as a stratum and sampling 6 from A, 10 from B, and 4 from C mirrors their relative sizes, ensuring representation from all groups and reducing sampling error within each group. Simple random sampling would mix individuals from all groups without guaranteeing representation from each stratum. Systematic sampling picks every nth individual from a list, which doesn't ensure proportional representation by group. Cluster sampling would involve selecting whole groups as units and often sampling within those clusters, rather than sampling within each stratum in proportion to its size. So the approach described is proportional stratified sampling.

7. A study observing multitasking in a large lecture hall and then testing recall finds results that reflect typical class behavior. What is the level of authenticity?

- A. low, because few participants**
- B. unknown, population not defined**
- C. moderate, because correlational**
- D. high, because multitasking observed should reflect typical class**

Authenticity here hinges on ecological validity—the extent to which findings mirror real-world conditions. Observing multitasking in a large lecture hall places participants in their natural study environment, with typical distractions and behaviors, rather than in a controlled lab. Testing recall in a way that reflects what actually happens in class further aligns the task with everyday demands students face. Because both the setting and behaviors resemble real-life conditions, the results are more likely to generalize to how students actually study and remember information in similar academic contexts. If the study had been done in a lab with a small, non-representative sample or with artificial tasks, authenticity would be lower, since the environment and behaviors wouldn't closely match real-world conditions. The key idea is that authentic settings and tasks produce findings that more accurately reflect how things work in everyday life, which is why this scenario is considered high authenticity.

8. Which sampling method involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and sampling from each subgroup using random selection within subgroups?

- A. Simple random sampling**
- B. Stratified sampling**
- C. Cluster sampling**
- D. Systematic sampling**

Stratified sampling divides the population into homogeneous subgroups and then randomly samples from each subgroup. This approach ensures each subgroup is represented in the final sample, which improves precision when subgroups differ on the trait being measured. For example, if you're studying attitudes across departments, you create a stratum for each department and randomly sample within each one. This differs from simple random sampling, which pulls from the entire population without regard to subgroups; cluster sampling groups people into clusters and samples entire clusters (or individuals within clusters) rather than guaranteeing representation from every subgroup; systematic sampling selects every kth person after a random start, which can miss important variation if there's a pattern in the list.

9. If a researcher wishes to study a population that is hard to locate, which sampling method is generally preferred?

- A. Purposive sampling**
- B. Quota sampling**
- C. Snowball sampling**
- D. Convenience sampling**

When you can't locate people easily, snowball sampling works by using the connections of initial participants to recruit others who fit the study criteria. You start with a few known individuals, and they refer peers, who refer more peers, and so on. This chain-referral process lets you reach members of hard-to-find or hidden groups that don't have a readily available list or sampling frame. This approach is the best among the given options because it actively expands the search through social networks, making it feasible to study populations that are difficult to locate. Purposive sampling targets specific characteristics but doesn't inherently help you find more participants beyond your initial pool. Quota sampling aims to match certain subgroups, but it still relies on locating people within a framework and often isn't practical for hidden or hard-to-reach groups. Convenience sampling depends on who's readily accessible, which usually excludes those who are difficult to locate in the first place. Keep in mind that snowball sampling can introduce bias since participants tend to recruit others like themselves, and it may raise confidentiality concerns, but it's a practical method when the population is hard to reach.

10. A researcher is assembling a sample of 100 participants from the undergraduate population on campus. He begins by recruiting Asian American students to match campus representation and stops at 12 Asian American students, then recruits 88 other students. What nonprobability sampling technique is this?

- A. Convenience sampling**
- B. Snowball sampling**
- C. Purposive sampling**
- D. Quota sampling**

Quota sampling is a nonprobability approach where the researcher divides the population into subgroups and sets a specific quota for each subgroup, then recruits until those quotas are filled. In this scenario, the researcher aims to mirror campus representation by ethnicity, stopping after reaching 12 Asian American participants and 88 other students to total 100. The key is filling predefined subgroup numbers rather than selecting participants at random, which is what makes this quota sampling. This differs from convenience sampling, which simply uses the most readily available participants without fixed quotas. Snowball sampling relies on participants referring others, not on meeting predetermined subgroup counts. Purposive sampling targets individuals with particular characteristics for a specific purpose, but quota sampling specifically emphasizes achieving a desired proportion of subgroups, not just selecting for a particular trait.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://psclearn6.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!