RESEARCH AND EVALUATION PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE

SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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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. Which statement correctly describes axial coding in qualitative analysis?

A. It identifies initial concepts

B. It tests hypotheses statistically

C. It links codes into broader categories and themes

D. It validates measurement instruments

2. Which design compares changes over time in the program area to changes in a similar area without the program?

A. Randomized controlled trial

B. Difference-in-differences design

C. Cross-sectional design

D. Case series

3. Do you need IRB approval before proceeding with an evaluation in the given scenario?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Only if funding is involved

D. Only if minors are participants

4. What are the three overarching purposes of process evaluation?

A. Program planning; program monitoring; quality assurance

B. Program description; program monitoring; quality assurance

C. Outputs; outcomes; impact

D. Needs assessment; feasibility study; scale-up plan

5. A program is evaluated during a period of a major external event that could influence outcomes. This creates vulnerability to which threat to internal validity?

A. History

B. Maturation

C. Selection bias

D. Instrumentation

6. Which evaluation type is used to determine whether the monetary benefits justify the costs?

A. Cost-benefit analysis

B. Cost-effectiveness evaluation

C. Outcome evaluation

D. Process evaluation

7. In the described two-week intervention with high attrition, the term for participants who do not complete the study is Mortality.

A. Attrition

B. Maturation

C. Mortality

D. Regression

8. Which statement about IRBs is true?

A. They provide funding for research

B. They protect human subjects and oversee consent processes

C. They review only grant proposals

D. They replace the need for informed consent

9. Internal validity concerns the extent to which observed outcomes can be attributed to the intervention rather than other factors. Which two threats are common in quasi-experimental designs?

A. Internal validity concerns whether observed effects are attributable to the intervention rather than other factors; threats include selection bias and history/maturation differences between groups.

B. Internal validity affects sampling adequacy; threats include measurement error and misclassification bias.

C. Internal validity is about external generalizability; threats include selection bias and recall bias.

D. Internal validity is about cost and feasibility; threats include attrition and dropouts.

10. In experimental designs, the control group primarily serves to

A. Generalize results

B. Provide a baseline to estimate the effect of the intervention by controlling for confounding variables

C. Increase sample size

D. Improve instrument reliability

Answers

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

Explanations

1. Which statement correctly describes axial coding in qualitative analysis?

A. It identifies initial concepts

B. It tests hypotheses statistically

C. It links codes into broader categories and themes

D. It validates measurement instruments

Axial coding is about linking codes into broader categories and themes by mapping how different concepts relate to each other. After the initial pass of breaking the data into concepts (open coding), axial coding reassembles those pieces by examining relationships among subcategories and connecting them around a central phenomenon. It looks at the conditions that influence things, the context in which they occur, the actions or interactions people take, and the consequences that follow. This creates a coherent structure that turns disparate codes into a clearer, more organized understanding or theory. For example, if you first identify codes like "fear of stigma," "seeking support," and "trust in professionals," axial coding would group these into a broader category such as "help-seeking in stigmatized contexts," outlining how context and interactions shape outcomes. Other options don't fit because identifying initial concepts occurs in open coding, not axial; testing hypotheses statistically is a quantitative method; and validating measurement instruments is about instrument validity, not about organizing qualitative codes into themes.

2. Which design compares changes over time in the program area to changes in a similar area without the program?

A. Randomized controlled trial

B. Difference-in-differences design

C. Cross-sectional design

D. Case series

When you can't randomize who gets the program, you can still estimate its impact by looking at how outcomes change over time in the area with the program compared to a similar area without it. This approach uses the difference of changes: you measure how the outcome moves from before to after in the program area and subtract how it moved in the nonprogram area. The idea is that anything that affects both areas similarly over time (like broader economic shifts) gets canceled out, leaving the net effect attributable to the program. This works best if the two areas would have followed parallel trends if the program hadn't been implemented. A randomized trial would assign the program at random, which is often not feasible and doesn't inherently require comparing changes over time with a nonprogram area. A cross-sectional design only looks at one point in time, missing the before-versus-after comparison. A case series describes outcomes in a group without a comparator, so it can't isolate the program's effect.

3. Do you need IRB approval before proceeding with an evaluation in the given scenario?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Only if funding is involved

D. Only if minors are participants

IRB review focuses on protecting people when you're doing research that aims to generate generalizable knowledge and involves human subjects. If the evaluation is strictly for internal program improvement and is not designed to produce findings intended for broad dissemination, many institutions consider it not to be research requiring IRB oversight. In that case you can proceed without IRB approval, as long as you still protect participant privacy and welfare. The decision would change if you plan to publish or generalize the results beyond the program, or if you are collecting identifiable information in a way that creates risk. Funding or whether minors are involved does not by itself determine the need for IRB review; what matters is whether the activity is being conducted as research with the potential for generalizable conclusions. So, for a typical internal evaluation aimed solely at improving a program, IRB approval is not required before starting.

4. What are the three overarching purposes of process evaluation?

A. Program planning; program monitoring; quality assurance

B. Program description; program monitoring; quality assurance

C. Outputs; outcomes; impact

D. Needs assessment; feasibility study; scale-up plan

Process evaluation looks at how a program is carried out, focusing on the delivery rather than the outcomes. The three overarching purposes are to document the program itself (program description), to track how the program is actually implemented in practice (program monitoring), and to safeguard and improve how it's delivered by ensuring standards and quality (quality assurance). Documenting the program describes its components, intended activities, and who's supposed to receive them, so everyone understands what's supposed to happen. Monitoring assesses delivery in real time—fidelity to the design, the extent of implementation (dose), reach to the target audience, and any adaptations that occur. Quality assurance uses the data from monitoring to identify problems, standardize practices, provide feedback, and support continuous improvement to maintain or raise quality. Other options focus on planning before implementation or on results (outputs, outcomes, impact), which are more about what the program aims to achieve or how it was conceived, rather than how it is actually delivered and improved during implementation.

5. A program is evaluated during a period of a major external event that could influence outcomes. This creates vulnerability to which threat to internal validity?

A. History

B. Maturation

C. Selection bias

D. Instrumentation

When a study takes place during a period dominated by a major external event, outcomes can change because of that event rather than because of the program being evaluated. This is known as a history threat to internal validity. The key idea is that something happening outside the study setting—like a policy shift, economic crisis, or natural disaster—can influence participants' results across the board, making it hard to tell whether observed changes are due to the program or the event. This differs from maturation, which are natural changes that occur over time within participants; from selection bias, which arises when groups aren't comparable at the start; and from instrumentation, which involves changes in measurement tools or procedures. In the scenario described, the critical factor is the external event occurring during the evaluation period, which can confound the program's true effect. Mitigation strategies include using a concurrent control group or employing designs that track outcomes across multiple time points to separate the program impact from the event's influence.

6. Which evaluation type is used to determine whether the monetary benefits justify the costs?

A. Cost-benefit analysis

B. Cost-effectiveness evaluation

C. Outcome evaluation

D. Process evaluation

The key idea is evaluating value in monetary terms by comparing what a program costs to the monetary value of the benefits it produces. This is done through cost-benefit analysis, which monetizes both costs and benefits and then looks at net benefits or a benefit-cost ratio. If the net benefit is positive or the ratio exceeds one, the monetary benefits justify the costs, supporting a decision to proceed or invest. Cost-benefit analysis differs from cost-effectiveness evaluation, which matches costs to outcomes measured in natural units (like lives saved or cases prevented) rather than converting those outcomes into monetary terms. Outcome evaluation focuses on whether the intended results occurred, without a primary emphasis on costs. Process evaluation examines how a program was implemented and what context affected delivery, not whether benefits justify costs.

7. In the described two-week intervention with high attrition, the term for participants who do not complete the study is Mortality.

A. Attrition

B. Maturation

C. Mortality

D. Regression

Attrition is the term for participants who do not complete a study. In research, attrition happens when people drop out or discontinue before the study ends, which can threaten the validity of results if those who stay differ from those who leave. Mortality means death, and is used in clinical trials when the outcome is death, not simply dropout. Maturation refers to natural changes in participants over time, and regression refers to scores drifting toward the mean on repeated testing. So in a two-week intervention with many dropouts, the correct description is attrition.

8. Which statement about IRBs is true?

A. They provide funding for research

B. They protect human subjects and oversee consent processes

C. They review only grant proposals

D. They replace the need for informed consent

IRBs exist to safeguard people in research by reviewing proposed studies and the consent process. They assess whether risks to participants are minimized and reasonable in relation to potential benefits, ensure that who is chosen to participate is fair, and verify protections for privacy and data confidentiality. A central and ongoing role is overseeing informed consent: they check that consent forms and procedures are understandable, voluntary, and provide enough information about risks, benefits, and alternatives. They also monitor the study as it proceeds and can require changes or stop a study if safety concerns arise. They do not provide funding, they do not review only grant proposals, and they do not replace informed consent; they ensure that informed consent is actually obtained and maintained. The statement that IRBs protect human subjects and oversee consent processes is the true one.

9. Internal validity concerns the extent to which observed outcomes can be attributed to the intervention rather than other factors. Which two threats are common in quasi-experimental designs?

A. Internal validity concerns whether observed effects are attributable to the intervention rather than other factors; threats include selection bias and history/maturation differences between groups.

B. Internal validity affects sampling adequacy; threats include measurement error and misclassification bias.

C. Internal validity is about external generalizability; threats include selection bias and recall bias.

D. Internal validity is about cost and feasibility; threats include attrition and dropouts.

Focus on internal validity: in quasi-experimental designs, groups aren't randomly assigned, so the biggest risk is that the groups differ before the intervention. This selection bias means observed post-intervention differences could reflect preexisting differences rather than the intervention itself. Another key concern is events over time that affect everyone but are not due to the intervention—history—along with natural changes as people mature, which can alter outcomes independently of the treatment. If one group experiences a concurrent event or the participants change over time, you can't confidently attribute effects to the intervention. These two threats—selection bias and history/maturation differences—are the core internal validity challenges in quasi-experiments. Other options mix in external validity (generalizability), measurement or sampling issues, or feasibility concerns. While those matter in research, they're not the two central internal-validity threats specific to quasi-experimental designs.

10. In experimental designs, the control group primarily serves to

A. Generalize results

B. Provide a baseline to estimate the effect of the intervention by controlling for confounding variables

C. Increase sample size

D. Improve instrument reliability

The main idea is that a control group provides a baseline for what would happen without the intervention, so you can estimate the intervention's effect by comparing groups that are treated the same except for the treatment. By keeping conditions and other factors the same, differences in outcomes can be attributed to the intervention rather than confounding variables like natural variation, placebo effects, or external events. This setup strengthens internal validity and helps separate the true effect of the treatment from other influences. The other options describe other study goals, but they aren't the primary function of the control group.

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://researchevaluation.examzify.com

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