

# Teaching Research Methods in Public Administration

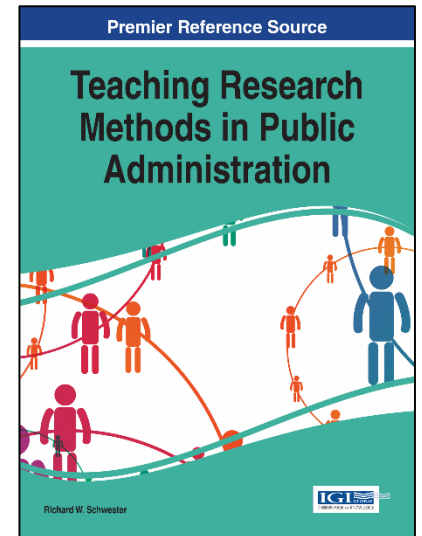
Part of the Advances in Public Policy and Administration (APPA) Book Series

Richard W. Schwester (City University of New York, USA)

## Description:

While there are many ways to collect information, many students have trouble understanding how to employ various research methods effectively. Since everyone learns and processes information differently, instructing students on successfully using these methods continues to be a challenge.

**Teaching Research Methods in Public Administration** combines empirical research and best practices on various research methods being employed by administrators.



## Readers:

This publication is an essential reference source for academics, public administration practitioners, and students interested in how information is gathered, processed, and utilized.

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## Topics Covered:

- Data Analysis
- Deductive Research
- Empirical Tools
- Experimentation
- Mixed Methods Approaches
- Policy Analysis
- Program Evaluation
- Research Ethics
- Surveying

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## Preface

What Makes This Book Different From Other Texts?  
Content and Structure of the Book

## Chapter 1: The Tools of Social Science Research

The Nature and Tools of Empiricism  
Surveys  
In-Depth Interviews  
Surveys vs. Interviews  
Focus Groups  
Field Observation  
Experimentation  
Existing Data  
Deductive v. Inductive Empirical Tools

## Chapter 2: The Deductive Research Question and Literature Review

Crafting a “Researchable” Research Question  
What Exactly Is a Hypothesis?  
Is the Topic and Question “Researchable?”  
Conducting a Relevant Literature Review  
What is a Literature Review?  
Conducting a Literature Review  
Writing a Literature Review  
Literature Review Terminology

## Chapter 3: The Unit of Analysis and Variables

What is a Unit of Analysis?  
Types of Variables and Identifying Variables  
Extraneous Variables  
Defining Variables

## Chapter 4: Measuring Variables

What Does Measurement Entail?  
Survey Example  
Experimentation Example  
Existing Data Example  
Measurement Reliability and Validity

## Chapter 5: Writing and Delivering Survey Questions

The Science of Writing Survey Questions  
The Pre-Test  
How a Pre-Test Works  
Methods of Delivering Survey Questions  
Writing Questions for Different Delivery Methods Delivering Telephone Surveys  
Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) and Internet Surveys  
Biases Inherent to Surveys  
Survey Research Designs

## Chapter 6: Designing Experiments

The Gold Standard of Experimental Design  
Two Groups (at least)  
Random Selection  
Pre-Test and Post-Test  
Quasi-Experimental Designs  
Non-Equivalent Two Group  
Pre-test / Post-test One Group  
Interrupted Time Series  
Natural Experiment  
Internal Validity

## Chapter 7: Existing Data as a Measurement Tool

Finding Existing Data  
Existing Data Example 1  
Existing Data Example 2  
Existing Data Example 3

## Chapter 8: Program Evaluation

What is Program Evaluation?  
The Importance of Stakeholders  
Obtaining Stakeholder Data  
Types of Program Evaluations  
Needs Assessment  
Assessment of Program Theory  
Assessment of Program Process

Program Impact Assessment  
Program Efficiency Assessment  
Planning an Evaluation  
Ethical Issues When Conducting Program Evaluations

## Chapter 9: Policy Analysis

What a Policy Analysis Entails  
Introduction  
Historical Background  
Literature Review  
Stakeholder Assessment  
Description of Policy Options  
Options Assessment Criteria  
Options Assessment  
Recommendation

## Chapter 10: Qualitative and Mixed Methods Approaches

Qualitative, Inductive Methods  
In-Depth Interviews  
Focus Groups  
Field Observation  
The Qualitative Research Question  
Making Sense of Qualitative Data  
Qualitative Research Designs  
A Mixed Method Approach to Social Science Research  
The Limitations of Qualitative Research

## Chapter 11: Sampling

What Is Sampling?  
Types of Sampling  
Simple random sampling (SRS)  
Systematic sampling  
Stratified sampling  
Cluster sampling  
The Terminology of Random Sampling  
Non-Probability Sampling Techniques  
Convenience sampling  
Quota sampling  
Snowball sampling  
Purposive sampling  
Random Digit Dialing (RDD)  
Should You Always Sample?

## Chapter 12: Practical Data Analysis

Levels of Measurement and Coding Your Data  
Ensuring Data Accuracy: The Importance of Data Cleaning  
Composite Measures  
Univariate Analysis  
Bivariate Analysis  
Multivariate Analysis

## Chapter 13: Research Ethics

Ethics Lessons and the Movie Ghostbusters  
Informed Consent  
The Milgram Experiments  
Deception in Research and “Covert” Research  
The Role of IRBs in Promoting Ethical Research

## Appendix 1: Elements of a Research Proposal

## Appendix 2: Sample Syllabus

## Appendix 3: Teaching and Learning Tips

## Appendix 4: Electronic Resources

## Appendix 5: For Further Reading

## Glossary of Key Terms

**Richard W. Schwester** is an Associate Professor of public management at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, The City University of New York (CUNY). He holds a BA from Johns Hopkins University and an MA and PhD from Rutgers University. His research centers on the use of technology in government, inter-local shared services, and police and emergency service delivery models. Professor Schwester's teaching responsibilities primarily include graduate-level courses in research methods, program evaluation, and public policy analysis. Professor Schwester has done consulting work for the states of New York and New Jersey, and has authored or co-authored 35 scholarly publications. Some of his more recent work appears in the *Journal of Housing Research*, *Public Budgeting and Finance*, *Public Performance and Management Review*, *Public Administration Quarterly*, *International Journal of Public Administration*, *International Review of Public Administration*, *Journal of Public Procurement*, and the *International Journal of Organization Theory and Behavior*. Professor Schwester is the co-author of *Public Administration: An Introduction* (2nd edition in press, 1st edition to be translated into Russian), editor of the *Handbook of Critical Incident Analysis*, and co-author of *Public Administration in a Globalized World: Theories and Practices Between the U.S. and Korea*.