

Framing The Research Question

Topics Covered:

- Characteristics of a Good Research Question
- Exercise: Evaluation of Research Questions
- Discussion: Evaluation of Research Questions

Characteristics of a Good Research Question

Interesting

Does the research question interest you?

Relevant

Is the question relevant to the field of urban and regional planning?

Specific

Is the question specific enough or is too vague and broad? Can you generate a clear hypothesis?

Feasible

Is it possible to answer the research question in the given time and resources? More specifically:

- Do you know what research methods might be needed to answer the question?
- Do you have mastery over those methods?
- Given your time and budget, do you have access to the data or other information you need,?

Exercise: Evaluation of Research Questions

| Research Question | Interesting | Relevant | Specific | T/R | Feasible Methods |
|--|-------------|----------|----------|-----|------------------|
| 1a. Is the actual incidence of crime in urban areas correlated with perception of crime? | y | y | n | n | nc |
| 1b. Is the actual incidence of crime in and around urban parks correlated with perception of crime? | y | y | n | n | nc |
| 1c. Is the actual incidence of crime in and around urban parks of Bay Area correlated with perception of crime? | y | y | y | n | nc |
| 1d. Is the actual incidence of crime in and around urban parks of Santa Clara County correlated with perception of crime? | y | y | y | mb | nc |
| 1e. Is the actual incidence of crime in and around neighborhood-level urban parks of City of Sunnyvale, CA correlated with perception of crime? | y | y | y | y | y |

y= yes

n= no

mb= may be

nc= not clear

Exercise: Evaluation of Research Questions (contd.)

| Research Question | Interesting | Relevant | Specific | T/R | Feasible Methods |
|--|-------------|----------|----------|-----|------------------|
| 2a. Will hosting Olympic Games dramatically affect the host city's planning/development? | y | y | n | n | nc |
| 2b. How did the development of Olympic Games-related new venues and facilities affect the historical urban form of host cities? | y | y | y | n | nc |
| 2c. How did the development of Olympic Games-related new venues and facilities affect the urban form of historical city centers of Barcelona, Rome and Seoul? | y | y | y | y | y |

y= yes

n= no

mb= may be

nc= not clear

Exercise: Evaluation of Research Questions (contd.)

| Research Question | Interesting | Relevant | Specific | T/R | Feasible Methods |
|---|-------------|----------|----------|-----|------------------|
| 3a. What was the impact of international trade treaties on elephant population in Kenya during the period 1970-1980? | y | n | y | y | y |
| 3b. How does urban development impact salmon population? | y | y | n | n | nc |
| 3c. How did the development "x" impact the Salmon population of the region "y"? | y | y | y | y | nc |

y= yes

n= no

mb= may be

nc= not clear