CAUSAL LOGIC

The relationship between a condition or variable and a particular consequence, with one event leading to the other.

Code of ethics

The standards of acceptable behavior developed by and for members of a profession.
Content analysis

The systematic coding and objective recording of data, guided by some rationale.

Control group

The subjects in an experiment who are not introduced to the independent variable by the researcher.

Control variable

A factor that is held constant to test the relative impact of an independent variable.
Correlation

A relationship between two variables in which a change in one coincides with a change in the other.

Cross-tabulation

A table that shows the relationship between two or more variables.

Dependent variable

The variable in a causal relationship that is subject to the influence of another variable.
Ethnography

The study of an entire social setting through extended systematic observation.

Experiment

An artificially created situation that allows a researcher to manipulate variables.

Experimental group

The subjects in an experiment who are exposed to an independent variable introduced by a researcher.
The unintended influence that observers or experiments can have on their subjects

A speculative statement about the relationship between two or more variables.

The variable in a causal relationship that causes or influences a change in a second variable.
Interview

A face-to-face or telephone questioning of a respondent to obtain desired information.

Mean

A number calculated by adding a series of values and then dividing by the number of values.

Median

The midpoint or number that divides a series of values into two groups of equal numbers of values.
Mode

The single most common value in a series of scores.

Observation

A research technique in which an investigator collects information through direct participation and/or closely watching a group or community.

Operational definition

An explanation of an abstract concept that is specific enough to allow a researcher to measure the concept.
Percentage

A portion of 100

Qualitative research

Research that relies on what is seen in field or naturalistic settings more than on statistical data.

Quantitative research

Research that collects and reports data primarily in numerical form.
Questionnaire

A printed or written form used to obtain information from a respondent.

Random sample

A sample for which every member of an entire population has the same chance of being selected.

Reliability

The extent to which a measure produces consistent results.
Research design

A detailed plan or method for obtaining data scientifically.

Sample

A selection from a larger population that is statistically representative of that population.

Scientific method

A systematic, organized series of steps that ensures maximum objectivity and consistency in researching a problem.
Secondary analysis

A variety of research techniques that make use of previously collected and publicly accessible information and data.

Survey

A study, generally in the form of an interview or questionnaire, that provides researchers with information about how people think and act.

Validity

The degree to which a measure or scale truly reflects the phenomenon under study.
Value neutrality

Max Weber’s term for objectivity of sociologists in the interpretation of data.

Variable

A measurable trait or characteristic that is subject to change under different conditions.