

Different types of data in criminal justice

Law



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Different Types of Data in Criminal Justice The substance abuse is major challenge facing criminal justice system in many countries. As a result, many social scientists conduct research to determine its root causes and impacts on the economy. These studies capture data in two forms namely qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative data cannot be measured and is generally described by words (William, Buckler and William, 2008). On the other hand quantitative can be measured and presented in terms of numerical (Francis, 2004). The following gives the examples of qualitative data that could be generated from a research about substance abuse among the youths.

Qualitative data

a) Reasons for abusing substances

Some of the expected answers are to feel happy, to become acceptable in a social group, to alleviate depression, to boost confidence, to become powerful and to relieve pain.

b) The expectations after taking drugs

Some of the expected answers are damage of ones social standing, deteriorating health and looking bad.

c) Factors that contributed to individuals substance abuse habits

Some of the expected answers are peer influence, parental influence, living in affected neighborhood and good initial experience.

Qualitative data

a) The percentage of females involved in substance abuse

This could be found by tabulating the number of female and male respondents who are engaged in substance abuse and then finding the ratio and expressing it as a percentage.

b) The amount of substance abused

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This could be found by tabulating the frequency of each substance. The high frequency indicates high popularity.

c) The average age of substance abuse

This could be found by adding all the ages captured in the survey and then dividing the total by the number of respondents (sample size).

2. The age issue could lead to confusing findings in substance abuse research. This is because most countries have laws that prescribe the legal drinking age. For instance the legal drinking age in United States is 21 while in United Kingdom it is 18 (Bamforth, 2009). As a result, youths who are below the drinking age may give wrong age for fear that legal action may be taken against them. Therefore, giving such information may be difficult to the respondents.

3.

a) Pie Chart

This is a powerful graph used to show the proportion or relative sizes of data. For this survey the percentage of males and females involved in substance abuse could be better presented using pie chart. Each gender would be represented by each segment of the pie chart.

b) Bar graph

A bar graph consists of vertical and horizontal bars whose lengths indicate the magnitude of the data. In this research, the bar graph would be appropriate in representing the amount of substance abused or the popularity of the substance. The frequency or the amount of substance would be placed on the vertical axis while the type of substance would be on the horizontal axis.

c) A line graph

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The trend of change between the drinking age and the years could be well captured in by line graph. This would be done by plotting the average age against the year. By doing so, the relationship between age the year would be established.

References

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Walliman, N., Buckler, S., & Walliman, N. (2008). Your dissertation in education. Los Angeles: SAGE.