

Part Two

Research Reports

Introduction

The research reports (or studies) reprinted in Part Two act as examples for the analysis given in Part One, and provide further exercises for the reader. The rationale for the selection of the twelve studies which comprise Chapters 10 to 21 has been explained in the introduction to Part One, but the main factors will be mentioned again here. The reports deal with topics within several major substantive areas of sociology – mainly education, stratification and deviance; they do not, however, require much previous knowledge of these areas, and exposure to an introductory sociology course should be sufficient. Since only simple quantitative methods are used, the reader requires only an elementary knowledge of descriptive statistics. As a whole, the studies illustrate a range of different research methods; in each case the empirical procedures used have been explained reasonably clearly by the author(s). Each report was originally published as an article in a major sociology journal; two were published in the 1950s, six in the 1960s and four in the 1970s. Five additional studies are summarised in Chapter 22, the purpose of which is to provide additional examples for certain aspects of research method discussed in Part One.

The selection of the studies has been more difficult than it may appear. In combination the criteria above rule out the majority of research reports; although, as I argue in Chapter 9, virtually all reports *can* be deciphered by the procedures developed in Part One, only a small proportion are suitable for use as examples in a book intended to demonstrate the approach. In addition to the factors already mentioned it was a requirement that each of the twelve reports be presented in such a way that it could be edited to

a shortened version but still provide a thorough account of the research.

Editing

In order to make maximum use of the space available in this book, each article has been edited. The versions reprinted here, which have been approved in this form by the authors, are on average 60 to 65 per cent the length of the original article. The main features of the editing procedure are as follows:

Details *included* are: the origins and purpose of the research, explanations of the conduct of the study, results (except for certain sections deleted for reasons of length), conclusions, and other material necessary for an understanding of the author's arguments linking evidence to theory. The material generally *excluded* is: footnotes and other details in the text referring to other studies, material peripheral to the main argument, and selected sections from the results (usually the less important sections). Although these were the main guidelines, an editing decision occasionally depended on other criteria. All major exclusions have been noted by brief editorial comments. Each edited version is intended to be as self-contained as the original article, so that all aspects of the research methods used can be analysed.

The following conventions have been used:

(1) *Footnotes and references*, as mentioned above, have been deleted unless they contain information necessary for the understanding of the study; essential information in footnotes has been incorporated in the text. References retained are cited in the text as (say) 'Smith, 1962: 25-30'; and the full references are given in the list at the end of this book.

(2) *Editing of text*

[] denotes editorial comment. Where a substantial section of text has been omitted it is replaced by a paragraph or short passage in square brackets. Further editorial comments have been included where necessary for clarity of presentation. A few minor changes have been made without enclosure in square brackets; these result mainly from the inclusion of footnotes into the main text.

. . . denotes the omission of a section of text without editorial comment.

Double quotation marks have been used throughout Part Two; within *editorial comments*, material in quotation marks is taken from the original research report.

There has been no attempt to impose uniformity of presentation (apart from the requirements of printing) since clearly it is of fundamental importance that a variety of styles of research reporting be represented here.

(3) *Tables and figures* which are relevant to the edited version are, of course, included. In common with Part One, table numbers are given in decimal notation, but otherwise tables have *not* been renumbered. For example, table 2 in Dornbusch and Hickman's study is included as Table 10.2 in Chapter 10; their first table has been omitted from the edited version and is referred to simply as table 1 in an editorial comment. Consequently, Table 10.1 is non-existent in this book, and there are several chapters in which certain table numbers are 'missing'. However, I have preferred this system to that of renumbering tables, which would have resulted in more confusion. There has been very little editing of the content and layout of tables; in a few cases explanatory notes have been edited or added.