Data in Head Start and Early Head Start

THE NATIONAL CENTER ON Program Management and Fiscal Operations™

Data Analysis Terms and Concepts

Term	Definition
Analysis	*noun*: **1.** an investigation of the component parts of a whole and their relations in making up the whole; **2.** the abstract separation of a whole into its constituent parts in order to study the parts and their relations
Code	*noun*: **1.** a category deemed important by the an individual(s) conducting the analysis; **2.** a method used to label important pieces of information contained in the narrative
Correlation	*noun*: **1.** a statistical relation between two or more variables such that systematic changes in the value of one variable are accompanied by systematic changes in the other; **2.** a statistic representing how closely two variables co-vary; it can vary from -1 (perfect negative correlation) though 0 (no correlation) to +1 (perfect positive correlation) (e.g., "What is the correlation between those two variables?")
Data	*noun*: a collection of facts from which conclusions may be drawn (e.g., statistical data)
Denominator	*noun*: the divisor of a fraction
Difference	*noun*: **1.** the number that remains after subtraction; **2.** the number that when added to the subtrahend gives the minuend; **3.** a variation that deviates from the standard or norm
Estimation	*noun*: **1.** a judgment of the qualities of something or someone; **2.** an approximate calculation of quantity or degree of worth (e.g., "It is my estimation that we need more volunteers.")
Interpretation	*noun:* **1.** an explanation of something that is not immediately obvious (e.g., "The data is open to many interpretations."); **2.** an explanation that results from interpreting something (e.g., "The report included his interpretation of the assessment.")
Interview	*noun*: **1.** the questioning of a person; **2.** a conversation in which information is elicited); often conducted by journalists (e.g., "My interviews with staff revealed a need for reflective supervision.") *verb*: discuss formally with for the purpose of an evaluation (e.g., "We interviewed the job candidates.")
Median	*noun*: the value below which 50 percent of the cases fall *adjective*: relating to or situated in or extending toward the middle
Mean	*noun*: an average of n numbers computed by adding some function of the numbers and dividing by some function of n
Mode	*noun*: the most frequent value of a random variable

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Narrative	*noun*: a message that tells the particulars of an act or occurrence or course of events; presented in writing or drama or cinema or as a radio or television program (e.g., "His narrative was interesting.") *adjective*: consisting of or characterized by the telling of a story (e.g., narrative poetry)
Numerator	*noun*: the dividend of a fraction
Percentage	*noun*: a proportion multiplied by 100
Qualitative	*adjective*: involving distinctions based on qualities (e.g., qualitative change) *adjective*: relating to or involving comparisons based on qualities
Quantitative	*adjective*: **1.** expressible as a quantity of relating to or susceptible of measurement (e.g., "Export wheat without quantitative limitations."); **2.** relating to the measurement of quantity (e.g., quantitative studies)
Questionnaire	*noun*: a form containing a set of questions; submitted to people to gain statistical information
Reliability	*noun*: the trait of being dependable or reliable
Standard Deviation	*noun*: the square root of the variance
Statistics	*noun*: a branch of applied mathematics concerned with the collection and interpretation of quantitative data and the use of probability theory to estimate population parameters
Statistics (Descriptive)	*noun*: **1.** a branch of statistics that denotes any of the many techniques used to summarize a set of data; **2.** using the data on members of set to describe the set.
Statistics (Inferential)	*noun*: comprises the use of statistics to make inferences concerning some unknown aspect (usually a parameter) of a population.
Sum	*noun*: **1.** the whole amount; **2.** a quantity obtained by addition
Survey	*noun*: short, descriptive summary of events *verb*: **1.** look over in a comprehensively; **2.** inspect; **3.** make a survey of; for statistical purposes (e.g., "He surveyed his new classmates.")
Themes	*noun*: **1.** a unifying idea that is a recurrent element within an interview or a narrative leading to a set of patterns. There is no agreed-upon methodology in narrative analysis to derive themes from patterns. One practice, however, is to use an analysis team, with "themes" being whatever sets of "like" information the team reaches consensus on, based on discussion of transcripts and analysis of patterns; **2.** the subject matter of a conversation or discussion
Trend	*verb*: a general direction in which something tends to move (e.g., "The data shows an positive trend in child attendance.")
Validity	*noun*: **1.** the quality of having legal force or effectiveness; **2.** the quality of being logically valid
Variance	*noun*: **1.** the second moment around the mean; **2.** expected value of the square of the deviations of a random variable from its mean value; **3.** the quality of being subject to variation, difference