

Research Question Examples: Psychology

About this document

This PDF contains 60 **psychology research question examples**, each quoted word for word from one of 28 completed dissertations and theses (2011–2026), grouped into 5 sections. Each question links to the thesis that asked it, so you can read how it was answered. Use them to see what a well-formed psychology research question looks like, then adapt the shape to your own study.

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Relational questions

These questions ask whether two things tend to go together, such as study time and exam results, without claiming that one causes the other.

1. Which types of social support are associated with caregiver depression?

Asked in: [Associations Between Caregiver Depression and Social Support Among Diverse Caregivers of Children with Developmental Delay and Autism](#) · Taiwo, Abiola · University of Oregon · 2024

2. Is the association between social support and caregiver depression moderated by child challenging behavior, child diagnosis (ASD vs. DD), and ethnicity (Latinx vs. non-Latinx)?

Asked in: [Associations Between Caregiver Depression and Social Support Among Diverse Caregivers of Children with Developmental Delay and Autism](#) · Taiwo, Abiola · University of Oregon · 2024

3. After accounting for caregiver income, education, and ethnicity, does social support explain unique variance in caregiver depression?

Asked in: [Associations Between Caregiver Depression and Social Support Among Diverse Caregivers of Children with Developmental Delay and Autism](#) · Taiwo, Abiola · University of Oregon · 2024

4. How do perinatal risks and early environmental harshness, both individually and in combination, predict pubertal timing?

Asked in: [DISENTANGLING THE IMPACT OF PRENATAL AND POSTNATAL EARLY LIFE STRESS ON PUBERTAL TIMING AND ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION](#) · Shaina Desiree Trevino · University of Oregon · 2022

5. How do perinatal risks, early environmental harshness, and pubertal timing predict aggression?

Asked in: [DISENTANGLING THE IMPACT OF PRENATAL AND POSTNATAL EARLY LIFE STRESS ON PUBERTAL TIMING AND ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION](#) · Shaina Desiree Trevino · University of Oregon · 2022

6. Does ability to regulate emotions predict individuals' own, as well as their partners', reports of dating violence?

Asked in: [Experiences of Dating Violence in Emerging Adult Couples: The Role of Attachment Style and Emotion Regulation](#) · Nicole Yarkovsky · University of Windsor · 2016

7. Is emotion regulation a mechanism through which individuals' attachment styles relate to their own, as well as their partners', reports of dating violence?

Asked in: [Experiences of Dating Violence in Emerging Adult Couples: The Role of Attachment Style and Emotion Regulation](#) · Nicole Yarkovsky · University of Windsor · 2016

8. Are higher levels of dating violence more likely to occur among couples for whom both partners report emotion regulation difficulties?

Asked in: [Experiences of Dating Violence in Emerging Adult Couples: The Role of Attachment Style and Emotion Regulation](#) · Nicole Yarkovsky · University of Windsor · 2016

9. What were the independent contributions of prosodic ability and executive functioning, when controlling for the other, to each word reading ability, and reading comprehension?

Asked in: [Exploring the Role of Prosodic Awareness and Executive Functions in Word Reading and Reading Comprehension: a Study of Cognitive Flexibility in Adult Readers](#) · Chan, Jessica S. · Queen's University · 2013

- 10. Did prosodic ability and executive functioning components make independent contributions to word reading and reading comprehension above and beyond vocabulary, fluid (non-verbal) intelligence, [rapid automatized naming] (Digits), and phonological [short-term memory]?**

Asked in: [Exploring the Role of Prosodic Awareness and Executive Functions in Word Reading and Reading Comprehension: a Study of Cognitive Flexibility in Adult Readers](#) · Chan, Jessica S. · Queen's University · 2013

- 11. Is there a relationship between job stress and perceived stress?**

Asked in: [Psychosocial factors, stress and job satisfaction of the academic staff of University of Iceland](#) · Guðrún Birna Einarsdóttir · University of Iceland · 2011

- 12. Is non-clinical burnout related to a decline in cognitive functions?**

Asked in: [The effects of non-clinical burnout on cognitive functioning: investigating the relationship between non-clinical burnout and cognitive functioning among employees](#) · Panagiota Vasiliki Koutsimani · University of Macedonia · 2021

- 13. Are authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved parenting styles associated with parent and child characteristics?**

Asked in: [The Impact of Parenting Styles and Parent and Child Risk Factors on Child Behavioral and Learning Outcomes](#) · McWhirter, Anna · University of Oregon · 2021

- 14. Are associations between parenting styles and child outcomes moderated by parent stress and parent education level?**

Asked in: [The Impact of Parenting Styles and Parent and Child Risk Factors on Child Behavioral and Learning Outcomes](#) · McWhirter, Anna · University of Oregon · 2021

- 15. Does a GFP-E specific to managers exist and, if so, how is it related to the Dark Triad, career success and satisfaction measures?**

Asked in: [Persönlichkeitseigenschaften und beruflicher Erfolg : ein vielschichtiger Ansatz](#) · Vivien Francesca Höflinger · University of Hohenheim · 2022

- 16. Do paradox personalities, in particular narcissism and humility, succeed in new work environments?**

Asked in: [Persönlichkeitseigenschaften und beruflicher Erfolg : ein vielschichtiger Ansatz](#) · Höflinger, Vivien Francesca · University of Hohenheim · 2022

Exploratory questions

These questions ask how or why something happens, usually where little research exists yet. They are common in qualitative studies built on interviews or observation.

- 17. How does a diagnosis of Turner Syndrome (TS) impact the lives of women living with TS?**

Asked in: [“A Very Resilient Bunch”: A Photographic Exploration into the Experiences of Women with Turner Syndrome](#) · Kristin M. Schramer · University of Windsor · 2023

- 18. How does a child with Asperger's syndrome cope with social relationships with both peers and adults?**

Asked in: [Children diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome coping and communication in everyday life](#) · Hindok, Marleen · TTK University of Applied Sciences · 2020

19. How can a parent support a child's coping with Asperger's syndrome?

Asked in: [Children diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome coping and communication in everyday life](#) · Hindok, Marleen · TTK University of Applied Sciences · 2020

20. How does parent-school collaboration affect a child's coping and social interactions with Asperger's syndrome in their daily lives?

Asked in: [Children diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome coping and communication in everyday life](#) · Hindok, Marleen · TTK University of Applied Sciences · 2020

21. In the context of their treatment, how do [Reproductive Endocrinology] patients construct the concept of joy?

Asked in: [Illuminating Joy in Reproductive Endocrinology Patients Through Journaling](#) · Spontarelli, Nicole · Texas Tech University · 2026

22. How did participants conceptualize the relationship between masculinity and femininity—as opposite ends of a bipolar scale (consistent with traditional M–F models), as independent dimensions (consistent with Bem's model), or in another way, such as rejecting these concepts?

Asked in: [Masculinity and Sexual Positioning in Men Who Have Sex With Men](#) · Wright, Eddie Jenia · University of Kansas · 2023

23. Are participants' feelings of masculinity influenced by engaging in insertive (topping) or receptive (bottoming) penile–anal intercourse?

Asked in: [Masculinity and Sexual Positioning in Men Who Have Sex With Men](#) · Wright, Eddie Jenia · University of Kansas · 2023

24. How do participants explain their feeling of masculinity when they top or bottom?

Asked in: [Masculinity and Sexual Positioning in Men Who Have Sex With Men](#) · Wright, Eddie Jenia · University of Kansas · 2023

25. How do [Second Generation Iranian Americans] define and conceptualize well-being?

Asked in: [Second Generation Iranian Americans Well-being: A Qualitative Study](#) · Amini, Bahaur · University of Kansas · 2022

26. Do family attitudes and beliefs about [Autism Spectrum Disorder] have an influence on sibling relationships?

Asked in: [Sibling Relationships in Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#) · White, Jamell Delaine · University of Maryland · 2013

27. What decision-making processes inform individuals to get a tattoo, choose a specific design, and choose a specific location?

Asked in: [The Permanence of Tattoos: Marked Bodies, Identities, and Symbolism in Emerging Adults](#) · Hill, Jodi K. · Texas Tech University · 2020

- 28.** How can the portrayal of Sonia's reflections about her identity in the book 'The Whole Story of Half a Girl' be understood based on James Marcia's theory of identity status, particularly in relation to Marcia's description of the developmental positions of moratorium and identity achievement?

Asked in: "Det som påminner mig om vem jag är, påminner mig alltid om vem jag inte är" : En religionspsykologisk studie om identitetsskapande i en kontext av att växa upp med olika religiösa traditioner · Khan, Saera · Uppsala University · 2020

- 29.** What motivated Swedish medical personnel to volunteer during the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa?

Asked in: Motiv och motivation bakom volontärism i extrema situationer. : En kvalitativ studie om Volunteer Function Inventory och dess behållning som analysverktyg. · Johannes Johansson · Jönköping University · 2015

Descriptive questions

These questions ask what is happening: how much, how often, or what kinds. They describe a situation rather than explain it.

- 30.** What role do face-to-face (FTF) and online communities for individuals affected by TS play in supporting, facilitating, or creating barriers to improving women's lives with TS?

Asked in: "A Very Resilient Bunch": A Photographic Exploration into the Experiences of Women with Turner Syndrome · Kristin M. Schramer · University of Windsor · 2023

- 31.** What are the thoughts of [stay-at-home fathers] when interacting with their children?

Asked in: Building Social Skills: A Qualitative Study of Relationships Between Stay-At-Home Fathers and Their Preschool Children · Sweet, Kayla Sagebiel · Texas A&M University · 2019

- 32.** What difficulties does a child with Asperger's syndrome face in their daily lives?

Asked in: Children diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome coping and communication in everyday life · Hindok, Marleen · TTK University of Applied Sciences · 2020

- 33.** What are the values that emerge across genres (i.e. letters and raps) and over time, and over cohorts in this Hip hop discourse program and do they suggest possible mutual influences?

Asked in: Letter to the President: Longitudinal Critical Discourse Analysis of Academic and Hip Hop Genres in a Rap Narrative Program · Roygardner, Debangshu · The Graduate Center, CUNY · 2017

- 34.** What is the nature of sibling interactions in families of young children with [Autism Spectrum Disorder]?

Asked in: Sibling Relationships in Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders · White, Jamell Delaine · University of Maryland · 2013

- 35.** How common are the authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved parenting styles in a community sample of families with children in kindergarten?

Asked in: The Impact of Parenting Styles and Parent and Child Risk Factors on Child Behavioral and Learning Outcomes · McWhirter, Anna · University of Oregon · 2021

- 36.** What is the symbolic value of tattoos for emerging adults?

Asked in: The Permanence of Tattoos: Marked Bodies, Identities, and Symbolism in Emerging Adults · Hill, Jodi K. · Texas Tech University · 2020

37. How has belief in conspiracy theories been measured and which conspiracy theories have been examined in the included literature?

Asked in: [Why did the earth become flat? : A systematic review of psychological factors and belief in conspiracy theories.](#) · Christensen, Sofia · Karlstad University · 2021

38. How could the motives and motivation of Swedish medical personnel be categorized in accordance with the Volunteer Function Inventory (VFI)?

Asked in: [Motiv och motivation bakom volontärism i extrema situationer. : En kvalitativ studie om Volunteer Function Inventory och dess behållning som analysverktyg.](#) · Johannes Johansson · Jönköping University · 2015

39. Is the Volunteer Function Inventory (VFI) a sufficient tool for analyzing the motives and motivation of Swedish medical personnel in the given case?

Asked in: [Motiv och motivation bakom volontärism i extrema situationer. : En kvalitativ studie om Volunteer Function Inventory och dess behållning som analysverktyg.](#) · Johannes Johansson · Jönköping University · 2015

40. What are the emotional reactions of bystanders to cyberbullying scenarios?

Asked in: [Reação e regulação emocional de observadores a cenários de cyberbullying](#) · Marta Sofia Nápoles Raminhas · University of Lisbon · 2020

41. What are the emotion regulation strategies of bystanders to cyberbullying scenarios?

Asked in: [Reação e regulação emocional de observadores a cenários de cyberbullying](#) · Marta Sofia Nápoles Raminhas · University of Lisbon · 2020

Comparative questions

These questions compare two or more groups or settings, such as two schools or two teaching methods, to see whether they differ.

42. How does adolescent self-regulation in narratives of social conflicts vary by relational context (family, school, peers) and adolescents' role as a participant in the conflict?

Asked in: [A Narrative Approach to Investigating the Contextual Nature of Adolescent Self-Regulation](#) · Conover, Kelly · The Graduate Center, City University of New York · 2018

43. How do context/role sensitive measures of self-regulation (process assessments) compare to the Adolescent Self-Regulatory Inventory, a trait-based measure, in terms of participant performances?

Asked in: [A Narrative Approach to Investigating the Contextual Nature of Adolescent Self-Regulation](#) · Conover, Kelly · The Graduate Center, City University of New York · 2018

44. Does the level of integration differ between adolescents with early and late disclosure and is there a difference when controlling for family type, current age and gender?

Asked in: [Adolescents' Integration of Donor Conception into their Identity](#) · Nestander, Sandra · Umeå University · 2023

45. Does the level of integration differ between adolescents in families with heterosexual and lesbian parents and is there a difference when controlling for age at disclosure, current age and gender?

Asked in: [Adolescents' Integration of Donor Conception into their Identity](#) · Nestander, Sandra · Umeå University · 2023

46. Which types of social support (family, informal, formal) are viewed as helpful to caregivers of young children with DD/ASD?

Asked in: [Associations Between Caregiver Depression and Social Support Among Diverse Caregivers of Children with Developmental Delay and Autism](#) · Taiwo, Abiola · University of Oregon · 2024

47. Does utilization of social support vary by ethnicity (Latinx vs. non-Latinx)?

Asked in: [Associations Between Caregiver Depression and Social Support Among Diverse Caregivers of Children with Developmental Delay and Autism](#) · Taiwo, Abiola · University of Oregon · 2024

48. What sex differences exist in the relations among perinatal risks, early environmental harshness, pubertal timing, and aggression?

Asked in: [DISENTANGLING THE IMPACT OF PRENATAL AND POSTNATAL EARLY LIFE STRESS ON PUBERTAL TIMING AND ADOLESCENT AGGRESSION](#) · Shaina Desiree Trevino · University of Oregon · 2022

49. Finally, when comparing patients who are engaging in structured journaling about their treatment, do any meaningful differences emerge?

Asked in: [Illuminating Joy in Reproductive Endocrinology Patients Through Journaling](#) · Spontarelli, Nicole · Texas Tech University · 2026

50. Are there any differences concerning stress and self-efficacy between girls and boys?

Asked in: [Self-efficacy's effect on perceived stress among high school students](#) · Svensson, Martin · The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences (GIH) · 2021

51. How successful are both light and dark personalities in terms of objective success criteria?

Asked in: [Persönlichkeitseigenschaften und beruflicher Erfolg : ein vielschichtiger Ansatz](#) · Höflinger, Vivien Francesca · University of Hohenheim · 2022

Causal questions

These questions ask whether one thing causes a change in another. Answering them usually takes an experiment or a careful design that rules out other explanations.

52. How do different experiences of identity salience influence employees' belonging and perceived need for allyship in the workplace?

Asked in: [Don't trump DEI : the impact of identity salience on belonging and allyship in the workplace.](#) · Maya Sakura Gray · University of Canterbury · 2026

53. What impact have psychosocial factors on job-related stress and which factors are most important in that sense?

Asked in: [Psychosocial factors, stress and job satisfaction of the academic staff of University of Iceland](#) · Guðrún Birna Einarsdóttir · University of Iceland · 2011

54. What are the effects of job stress on job satisfaction?

Asked in: [Psychosocial factors, stress and job satisfaction of the academic staff of University of Iceland](#) · Guðrún Birna Einarsdóttir · University of Iceland · 2011

55. How is students' perceived stress level affected by their level of self-efficacy?

Asked in: [Self-efficacy's effect on perceived stress among high school students](#) · Svensson, Martin · The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences (GIH) · 2021

56. What is the influence of the time of day on driving under sleep inertia?

Asked in: [Sleep inertia in automated driving : how circadian and homeostatic factors influence post-sleep driver state, takeover, and driving behavior](#) · Markus Tomzig · University of Ulm · 2026

57. What is the influence of the duration of the nap opportunity on driving under sleep inertia?

Asked in: [Sleep inertia in automated driving : how circadian and homeostatic factors influence post-sleep driver state, takeover, and driving behavior](#) · Markus Tomzig · University of Ulm · 2026

58. [D]o authentic leadership and psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience) have an effect on work engagement amongst employees at a financial institution in Lesotho?

Asked in: [The effect of authentic leadership and psychological capital on work engagement amongst employees in leadership positions at Standard Lesotho Bank](#) · Sekoere, Ithabeleng Miriam · University of the Free State · 2015

59. Do participants' cognitive ability and motivation levels influence the accuracy of problem solving during the think aloud interview?

Asked in: [The Effects of Cognitive Ability, Motivation and Perception of Interview on the Accuracy and Validity of Think Aloud Interview Data](#) · Alina Lutsyk · University of Alberta · 2019

60. Do levels of anxiety and comfort influence students' perception of the think-aloud interview?

Asked in: [The Effects of Cognitive Ability, Motivation and Perception of Interview on the Accuracy and Validity of Think Aloud Interview Data](#) · Alina Lutsyk · University of Alberta · 2019

How to adapt a question to your own study

Every question here was asked by someone else, about their own setting. These four steps turn one into a question that is yours.

- 1. Pick the shape, not the wording.** Notice whether the question compares, explores, explains or measures. That shape is what transfers to your study.
Recommended reading: [How to write a research question](#)
- 2. Swap in your own population and setting.** Change who, where and when, and check the question still makes sense.
Recommended reading: [How to find a research gap](#)
- 3. Check it fits your method.** A "how" or "why" question usually points to qualitative work; "how much" or "is there a relationship" to quantitative.
Recommended reading: [Qualitative vs quantitative research](#)
- 4. Line up your aims, objectives and questions.** Your committee will check that they agree.
Recommended reading: [Research aims, objectives and questions](#)

Do this with two or three questions and compare them: the one you can actually answer with the time and access you have is usually the right one.