

#### **OPTION 4: GRADUATION PAPER BASED ON USING PUBLICLY AVAILABLE DATASETS**

Groups can use publicly available large datasets (e.g., World Value Survey datasets) to conduct their graduation projects. The idea behind the publisher's data sharing is to make data open for reuse. Using existing large data sets offers students a unique opportunity to examine their research questions in a time- and cost-effective manner. In this type of graduation project, rather than collecting original data, groups are expected to examine their research ideas by using large data sets that already exist. Groups should carefully consider if the existing data set's available power and data quality are adequate to answer the proposed research questions.

Groups are expected to find a new research idea, formulate a new research question and hypotheses, and write a brief research proposal before they analyze the existing datasets. Importantly, groups are also expected to address and justify why they use the existing specific data set instead of collecting original data.

All steps, except data collection, should be almost identical with the steps of conducting the research type of graduation project. Specifically, the graduation project based on using existing data sets should include the following steps: finding a research question, formulating the hypotheses, writing a brief research proposal, selecting an appropriate data set, preparing data set for analysis, calculating power, addressing validity and reliability issues, conducting statistical analyses to examine research hypotheses, writing the report in a manuscript format, and presenting the study.

Groups should consider the following issues:

- *Data should have free access, or be available upon request.* In most cases, data sets are freely available for reuse by other researchers. Groups are required to take the permission of the authors unless specified in the paper of the journal. Some datasets can be accessed if only the requester completes the registration information that is asked by the organization/survey company.
- *Data should be relevant to the research questions and the variables.* Data should include measures that can allow groups to examine their research questions. The data from the past (even the recent past) should be still applicable to address the research question. Groups should download the dataset and all relevant files (e.g., explanations about scales, codebooks). Groups are expected to understand the study design, characteristics of measures, and sample.
- *Using existing data should be justified.* Groups are expected to explain why they use the existing data sets instead of collecting new data. Groups, for example, can use existing data sets to examine their ideas in nation-wide, world-wide representative

samples or in samples with the target characteristics that are not easily accessible (e.g., Christian Syrian Refugees).

- *Data needs to be in a form that can be analyzed.* Data needs to be appropriate for data analysis. Datasets generally come at least in Excel format. If data sets do not come in the SPSS format, groups should convert it.
- *Datasets should be cited.*
- *Ethical approval will not be needed.*