REQUIRED THEORY QUESTION

1. Perhaps the closest thing criminology has to a law is the fact that males engage in more crime and delinquency than females. This finding has been observed throughout history, in various countries, both longitudinal and cross-sectional studies, and using different methods for measuring criminal and delinquent behavior.

First, review evidence that indicates that males engage in more crime than females. Second, identify two plausible theories that offer explanations for this gender difference and discuss their propositions regarding gender and crime, reviewing the literature to support your points. Third, based on your review of the literature/empirical evidence, draw a conclusion about which theory is better suited for explaining why males and females differ regarding crime and delinquency.

REQUIRED METHODS QUESTION

2) Define random sampling and random assignment and design one study using each approach (two studies total). For each study, be sure to describe the research questions, the sample, the measures, and analysis options you might use as well as indicate how the random assignment or random sampling would work and indicate why your approach is appropriate to this study. What are the general advantages/strengths and disadvantages/limitations of each—random sampling and random assignment?

PICK TWO OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

3) Life Course or Developmental Theories of Criminal Behavior offer integrated and complex explanations of problematic behaviors. Some scholars have suggested that those characteristics (integration and complexity) are as much a disadvantage as they are an advantage. Take any two Life Course (developmental) theories and evaluate their advantages and disadvantages in terms of a standard set of criteria (which you clearly specify) by which you would evaluate any theory of crime or delinquency.

4) Different theories argue for different approaches to developing punishment strategies (i.e., those designed based on deterrence, retribution, rehabilitation, or incapacitation). Pick two theories of crime that would argue for different punishment approaches. Compare and contrast the theories in terms of their tenets, arguments, and their logic regarding why crime happens and how the theory would argue we can solve it (which punishment strategy would work best and what particular approaches it might suggest we use). Where do the theories correspond and where do they diverge on these issues? Why do you believe each would argue for the particular punishment strategy? Finally, indicate which theory you believe is more “correct” in terms of the causes and solutions to crime and support your argument.
5) Too often we read in the discussion section of a paper that the study has failed to support a theoretically derived hypothesis—that the theory is just fine but the way in which the study was forced to measure the concepts resulted in the non-supportive findings. From recent (past 10 years) research, identify and describe a study that fits this description (failure to support the theory because of poor measurement). Discuss why the measure was poor and how you would improve upon it. Then identify a study in which the measure(s) used was, in your opinion, appropriate yet the findings failed to support the theory. Discuss why the measure(s) was appropriate. What implications does this study have for the theory?

6) Imagine that you have been assigned to teach a graduate level research methods course in a Criminology program. Identify two core methodological issues that you would be certain to cover and select examples from the criminological literature to illustrate the nature of and importance of these issues. Select examples that are "good" examples in the sense that they deal with the respective issues in a sophisticated way. Explain the rationale underlying the selection of your examples.