

Chapter Two: The Research Enterprise in Psychology

PSY 100

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Research Participants

- **Population**
 - Entire group about which the investigator wants to draw conclusions
- **Sample**
 - Subset of the population chosen by the investigator for the study
- **Random Sample**
 - Every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study

Descriptive Research

- **Naturalistic Observation**
- **Surveys & Interviews**
 - **Social Desirability**
 - The tendency of participants to tell the interviewer what they think is socially appropriate or desirable rather than what is the truth.
- **Case Study**

Descriptive Research

- **Standardized Tests**
 - **Two features:**
 - 1) individual's score is totaled to yield a single score, or set of scores, that reflects something about the individual
 - 2) the individual's score is compared to the scores of a large group of similar people to determine how the individual responded relative to others
- **Physiological Research**
- **Advantages and Disadvantages of Descriptive Research**

Correlational Research

- **Interested in discovering relationships between different factors (variables) using statistical techniques**
- **Correlation Coefficient**
 - The number that reflects the type and degree of relationship between two variables
 - **Two factors:**

- Magnitude
- Direction

Correlational Research

- Two types of designs for correlational research
 - Longitudinal
 - Cross-sectional

Experimental Research

- Can establish cause-and-effect relationship
 - Covariance of events
 - Time-order relationship
 - Elimination of confounding variables
- Components of an experiment
 - Independent variable
 - The factor that is manipulated or changed by the experimenter to see its effects on some other variable

Experimental Research

- Dependent Variable
 - The variable that is expected to change as a result of the manipulation of the independent variable
- Experimental Group
 - A group whose experience is manipulated
- Control Group
 - A comparison group that is treated in every way like the experimental group except for the manipulated factor

Experimental Research

- Random Assignment to Condition
 - Occurs when researchers assign participants to experimental and control groups by chance
 - Eliminates biases and improves generalizability
- 3 ifs and then
 - If the two groups are comparable at pre-test, and
 - If there is a difference in the dependent variable between the groups at post-test, and
 - If the only thing that differs between the groups is the independent variable
 - Then you can say the independent variable caused the change in the dependent variable

Ethical Considerations

- APA identifies four areas of concern:
 - The right to privacy
 - People must be fully voluntary participants
 - Participants must be given informed consent

- There should be no lasting harm from participating in research
- HSRB

Ethical Considerations

- Ethical Considerations for animal subjects

How to Read a Psychology Journal Article

- **Journal**

- Publishes scholarly and academic information, usually in a specific domain

- **Journal Articles**

- **Format**

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Method
- Results
- Discussion