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**Confounding of variables** | A condition that exists whenever two variables are linked together in a way that makes it difficult to sort out their independent effects. | | **Control group** | Subjects in a study who do not receive the special treatment given to the experimental group. | | **Correlation** | The extent to which two variables are related to each other. | | **Correlation coefficient** | A numerical index of the degree of relationship between two variables. | | **Data collection techniques** | Procedures for making empirical observations and measurements. | | **Dependent variable** | In an experiment, the variable that is thought to be affected by the manipulation of the independent variable. | | **Descriptive statistics** | Statistics that are used to organize and summarize data. | | **Double-blind procedure** | A research strategy in which neither subjects nor experimenters know which subjects are in the experimental or control groups. | | **Experiment** | A research method in which the investigator manipulates a variable under carefully controlled conditions and observes whether any changes occur in a second variable as a result. | | **Experimental group** | The subjects in a study who receive some special treatment in regard to the independent variable. | | **Experimenter bias** | A phenomenon that occurs when a researcher’s expectations or preferences about the outcome of a study influence the results obtained. | | **Extraneous variables** | Any variables other than the independent variable that seem likely to influence the dependent variable in a specific study. | | **Hypothesis** | A tentative statement about the relationship between two or more variables. | | **Independent variable** | In an experiment, a condition or event that an experimenter varies in order to see its impact on another variable. | | **Inferential statistics** | Statistics that are used to interpret data and draw conclusions. | | **Journal** | A periodical that publishes technical and scholarly material, usually in a narrowly defined area of inquiry. | | **Mean** | The arithmetic average of the scores in a distribution. | | **Median** | The score that falls exactly in the center of a distribution of scores. | | **Mode** | The score that occurs most frequently in a distribution. | | **Nearsightedness** | A vision deficiency in which close objects are seen clearly but distant objects appear blurry. | | **Operational definition** | A definition that describes the actions or operations that will be made to measure or control a variable. | | **Participants** | See Subjects. | | **Placebo effects** | The fact that subjects’ expectations can lead them to experience some change even though they receive an empty, fake, or ineffectual treatment. | | **Population** | The larger collection of animals or people from which a sample is drawn and that researchers want to generalize about. | | **Random assignment** | The constitution of groups in a study such that all subjects have an equal chance of being assigned to any group or condition. | | **Replication** | The repetition of a study to see whether the earlier results are duplicated. | | **Research methods** | Differing approaches to the manipulation and control of variables in empirical studies. | | **Response set** | A tendency to respond to questions in a particular way that is unrelated to the content of the questions. | | **Sample** | The collection of subjects selected for observation in an empirical study. | | **Sampling bias** | A problem that occurs when a sample is not representative of the population from which it is drawn. | | **Social desirability bias** | A tendency to give socially approved answers to questions about oneself. | | **Standard deviation** | An index of the amount of variability in a set of data. | | **Statistical significance** | The condition that exists when the probability that the observed findings are due to chance is very low. | | **Statistics** | The use of mathematics to organize, summarize, and interpret numerical data. See also Descriptive statistics, Inferential statistics. | | **Subjects** | The persons or animals whose behavior is systematically observed in a study. | | **Survey** | A descriptive research method in which researchers use questionnaires or interviews to gather information about specific aspects of subjects’ behavior. | | **Theory** | A system of interrelated ideas that is used to explain a set of observations. | | **Variability** | The extent to which the scores in a data set tend to vary from each other and from the mean. | | **Variables** | Any measurable conditions, events, characteristics, or behaviors that are controlled or observed in a study. | | spacer_tr | |