

CHAPTER 2: The Methods of Social Psychology

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. All of the following are examples of resources used in archival research EXCEPT
- police reports.
 - newspaper articles.
 - firsthand observations of behavior.
 - databases.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

2. Interviews and written questionnaires are parts of which type of research method?
- observation
 - correlation
 - experiment
 - survey

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

3. A social psychologist finds a relationship between lower socioeconomic status and the likelihood of being divorced. This study most likely describes which type of research method?
- observational
 - archival
 - experimental
 - correlational

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

4. A study that is conducted over a long period of time with the same population is known as a(n) _____.
- observational study.
 - longitudinal study.
 - cross-sectional study.
 - mixed design study.

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

5. Experiments are different from other research methods in that they encompass which of the following components?
- control group
 - independent variable
 - random assignment
 - All of the above choices are components of experiments.

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

6. The independent variable in an experiment is the variable that is
- manipulated and is hypothesized to be the cause of a particular outcome.
 - the variable that is measured.
 - compared with the experimental condition.
 - an indication of the degree of the relationship between two variables.

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

7. In an experiment, the control condition is

- a. manipulated and is hypothesized to be the cause of a particular outcome.
- b. the variable that is measured.
- c. compared with the experimental condition.
- d. an indication of the degree of the relationship between two variables.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

8. The dependent variable in an experiment is the variable that is
- a. manipulated and is hypothesized to be the cause of a particular outcome.
 - b. the one being measured.
 - c. compared with the experimental condition.
 - d. an indication of the degree of the relationship between two variables.

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

9. The primary difference between natural experiments and standard experiments is that natural experiments
- a. do not involve independent variables.
 - b. do not involve dependent variables.
 - c. typically involve random assignment of individuals.
 - d. do not typically involve random assignment of individuals.

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

10. Which of the following best describes a research study that randomly assigns people to different conditions and carefully controls all of the other circumstances so that they will be the same or very similar between the two conditions?
- a. experiment
 - b. correlation
 - c. survey
 - d. observation

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

11. When random sampling is used, it means that
- a. people are selected based on a specific trait.
 - b. every member of a population has an equal chance of being selected.
 - c. some members of a population are more likely than others to be selected.
 - d. all members of the population are sampled.

ANS: B DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

12. Which of the following is the best example of observational research?
- a. living with a group of people and observing their behavior
 - b. reviewing historical records to find trends in behavior patterns
 - c. examining the relationship between two variables
 - d. randomly assigning people to different situational conditions and observing their behavior

ANS: A DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

13. Which of the following would be an example of random sampling in a survey designed to learn more about college students?

- a. asking students to fill out a survey in a campus magazine and then mail it to the investigators
- b. tossing a coin to determine who will be surveyed from a list of all students enrolled
- c. surveying all customers who visit a particular coffee shop on campus
- d. All of the above choices are examples of random sampling.

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

14. What is one of the most important differences between correlational and experimental research designs?
- a. Experiments measure the degree of the relationship between two variables.
 - b. Correlations only examine one variable.
 - c. Experiments use random assignment.
 - d. It is impossible to determine cause by doing an experiment.

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

15. Which of the following correlations indicates the lowest degree of relationship between two variables?
- a. 1.0
 - b. 0.8
 - c. 0.6
 - d. 0.2

ANS: D DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

16. Which of the following scatterplot graphs displays the highest degree of relationship between variables?



ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

17. Which of the following research methods is the best way to identify a *causal relationship* between two variables?
- a. observation
 - b. archive
 - c. correlation
 - d. experiment

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

18. The textbook describes an experiment by Darley and Batson (1973) that looked at willingness to help in seminary students. In one condition, participants were made to hurry from one building to another by being told that they were late for the experiment. In the other condition, participants were only told to go over to another building in order to start the experiment. Both groups encountered a person lying on the ground on their way to the other building. The experimenter observed the participants from both groups and counted the number of people who stopped to check on the person lying on the ground. It was found that the participants who were in a hurry stopped much less frequently than the participants who were not in a hurry. In this experiment, what was the independent variable?
- being made to hurry from one building to another
 - the person lying on the ground
 - the number of people stopping to check on the person lying on the ground
 - going from one building to another

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

19. A researcher examines the galvanic skin response (GSR) of people holding a clear plastic jar containing a spider. She compares the GSRs of people with spider phobias with the GSRs of people without spider phobias. In this experiment, the galvanic skin response functions as _____.
- an independent variable.
 - a dependent variable.
 - a control group.
 - random assignment.

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

20. The textbook describes an experiment by Darley and Batson (1973) that looked at willingness to help in seminary students. In one condition, participants were made to hurry from one building to another by being told that they were late for the experiment. In the other condition, participants were only told to go over to another building in order to start the experiment. Both groups encountered a person lying on the ground on their way to the other building. The experimenter observed the participants from both groups and counted the number of people who stopped to check on the person lying on the ground. It was found that the participants who were in a hurry stopped much less frequently than the participants who were not in a hurry. In this experiment, what was the dependent variable?
- being made to hurry from one building to another
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 - the number of people stopping to check on the person lying on the ground
 - going from one building to another

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

21. The problem with *self-selection* in research is that
- people often choose the experimental condition in which they want to participate.
 - people often overestimate their own contributions to the research.
 - it makes causal interpretations difficult.
 - it violates ethical guidelines.

ANS: C DIF: Difficult REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

22. A study shows that people who watch the local evening news believe the world is more dangerous than do people who do not watch the evening news. On the basis of this study, a newspaper reporter concludes that watching the evening news leads people to believe the world is more dangerous than it actually is. This is a flawed conclusion because
- the reporter has a bias because he works for the newspaper.

- b. it confuses a correlational relationship with a causal relationship.
- c. it fails to compare evening news viewers with newspaper readers.
- d. one study does not provide enough evidence to make this type of conclusion.

ANS: B DIF: Difficult REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

23. A biased sample would most likely result in which of the following?
- a. invalid conclusions based on the survey results
 - b. a violation of ethical principles in research
 - c. a valid interpretation of the data
 - d. too large a sample size

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

24. It is very common for magazines to conduct surveys in which readers voluntarily fill out survey cards and mail the cards to the publisher. The main problem with conducting a survey in this manner is that _____.
- a. some of these surveys will be lost by the postal service.
 - b. people are not truthful when filling out anonymous surveys.
 - c. mail-in surveys are generally not as effective as surveys conducted over the Internet.
 - d. people who respond to the survey are likely to be different from those who do not respond.

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

25. Experiments are the best research method for finding causal relationships between variables because they incorporate _____ and _____ into their design.
- a. control groups; self-selection
 - b. control groups; random assignment
 - c. external validity; dependent variables
 - d. independent variables; informed consent

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

26. Random assignment is an important aspect of experiments because it
- a. allows for more statistically significant results.
 - b. is consistent with institutional review board policies.
 - c. ensures fairness because everyone has an equal chance for selection.
 - d. cancels out individual differences and reduces selection biases between groups.

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

27. If a research group plans to conduct a survey poll about an upcoming presidential election in the United States, what is the minimum percentage of all likely voters that will be needed to obtain an accurate estimation of voter opinion, assuming that a random sample is obtained?
- a. 2 percent
 - b. 20 percent
 - c. 50 percent
 - d. 80 percent

ANS: A DIF: Difficult REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

28. You read the results of a survey that reports that two-thirds of *Cosmopolitan* readers lost weight by “going vegan.” You should not give the report of this survey much credence because
- not everyone in this survey was equally likely to be surveyed.
 - it confuses a correlational relationship with a causal relationship.
 - people who responded to the survey are not likely the same as those who did not.
 - All of the above choices are reasons that the survey results should not be trusted.

ANS: D DIF: Difficult REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

29. Which of the following is a potential limitation of correlational research?
- We can never be sure about causality.
 - The degree of the relationship cannot be inferred.
 - Independent variables can be manipulated.
 - There is no allowance for self-selection of participants.

ANS: A DIF: Difficult REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

30. Which of the following indicates the highest degree of relationship between variables?
- 0.9
 - + 0.8
 - 0.6
 - 0.2

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

31. An experiment that is set in the real world, and in which the participants themselves are usually unaware that they are participating in a research study, is usually described as a _____.
- longitudinal study.
 - laboratory experiment.
 - field experiment.
 - correlational study.

ANS: C DIF: Easy
REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research
OBJ: Factual

32. If an experiment produces reliable results, what does this mean?
- There is a low probability of obtaining these results by chance alone.
 - The independent variable had a strong effect on the dependent variable.
 - It is likely to yield consistent results.
 - There is a strong correlation between some measurement and what that measurement is supposed to predict.

ANS: C DIF: Easy
REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research
OBJ: Factual

33. When there is a high correlation between a measurement instrument and the outcomes that the instrument is supposed to predict, then this instrument is said to be high in _____.
- measurement validity
 - internal validity
 - reliability
 - statistical significance

ANS: A DIF: Easy
REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research
OBJ: Factual

34. If a social psychology experiment is conducted that has very little relation to real-life experience or situations, then this experiment would be said to be low in _____.
- a. external validity c. reliability
b. internal validity d. statistical significance

ANS: A

DIF: Easy

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

35. When an experiment has poor internal validity, which of the following might be of concern?
- The results of the experiment may not relate to real-world situations.
 - It might be difficult to determine if the independent variable was what produced the result.
 - The observed results may not be statistically significant.
 - The results may not be practically significant.

ANS: B

DIF: Medium

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

36. Social psychologists will often run pilot studies that are very similar to actual experiments that they intend to run later but that differ in that participants are used as consultants to check that the experiment instructions are understandable, that the scenarios are believable, and so forth. Running a pilot study such as this particularly helps to increase the _____ of an experiment.
- a. external validity
 - b. internal validity
 - c. reliability
 - d. statistical significance

ANS: B

DIF: Medium

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Applied

37. Random assignment is a crucial component of experiment design. Failing to use random assignment when placing participants into groups would have the most effect on the _____ of an experiment.
- a. external validity c. measurement validity
b. internal validity d. statistical significance

ANS: B

DIF: Difficult

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

38. A social psychologist conducts an experiment and finds a statistically significant result. This means that
- the probability of obtaining this finding by chance alone is *less than* some quantity.
 - the probability of obtaining this finding by chance alone is *greater than* some quantity.
 - the experiment is very high in external validity.
 - the experiment is very low in external validity.

ANS: A

DIF: Difficult

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

39. One of the primary reasons field experiments are conducted is that they
- are logistically very easy to carry out.
 - are very high in external validity.
 - incorporate a high degree of experimental control.

d. usually result in statistically significant results.

ANS: B

DIF: Medium

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

40. High school seniors are given a test that is supposed to predict scholastic performance during the first year of college. When the test results are compared with the students' actual first-year performance, there is no correlation between the test scores and performance. This is an example of poor _____.

a. statistical significance

c. measurement validity

b. reliability

d. internal validity

ANS: C

DIF: Medium

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

41. A statistically significant result depends on which two factors?
- the size of the difference between groups and validity of the experiment
 - the size of the difference between groups and the number of cases it is based on
 - the validity of the experiment and the number of cases it is based on
 - the validity of the experiment and the number of dependent variables the study used

ANS: B

DIF: Difficult

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

42. An intervention is
- a debriefing review conducted at the conclusion of an experiment.
 - a punishment delivered to a person.
 - an effort to change a person's behavior.
 - a measure taken by psychologists to minimize bias in study results.

ANS: C

DIF: Easy

REF: Basic and Applied Research

OBJ: Factual

43. A group of social psychologists are working on a research project with the aim of promoting condom use as a way to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. This type of research project is probably best described as

a. basic science.

c. pseudo-science.

b. applied science.

d. hard science.

ANS: B

DIF: Medium

REF: Basic and Applied Research

OBJ: Applied

44. Research in basic science aims to
- solve real-world problems.
 - understand simple questions in science.
 - solve difficult questions in science.
 - understand a phenomenon in its own right without concern with real-world issues.

ANS: D

DIF: Easy

REF: Basic and Applied Research

OBJ: Conceptual

45. The social psychologist Carol Dweck found that people who believe that intelligence is a matter of hard work actually study harder in school and get better grades. She used this finding to design an academic success program targeted to minority junior high school students. What does this illustrate about the connection between basic and applied research?
- a. Basic research always has to come before applied research.
 - b. Applied research is not useful without also engaging in basic research.
 - c. Basic and applied research should not be conducted by the same person.
 - d. Basic research can lead to theories used to design applied interventions.

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: Basic and Applied Research
OBJ: Conceptual

46. An institutional review board (IRB) has reviewed a study and determined that participating in the study will likely make the participants feel uncomfortable and embarrassed. According to the textbook, could the IRB decide to allow the researchers to begin this study?
- a. No; making participants uncomfortable is never acceptable.
 - b. Yes; the IRB examines only whether participants will be in physical pain.
 - c. Yes; as long as participants are not overly harmed and the research has significant value.
 - d. No; if any aspects of research studies are harmful in any way, IRBs cannot allow them.

ANS: C DIF: Medium REF: Basic and Applied Research
OBJ: Applied

47. The function of an institutional review board is to
- a. review university research expenditures.
 - b. review grant proposals to ensure that they are financially feasible.
 - c. review research proposals and judge the ethical appropriateness of the research.
 - d. review the reliability of research findings at the institution.

ANS: C DIF: Easy REF: Ethical Concerns in Social Psychology
OBJ: Applied

48. Research conducted at universities must first be reviewed by an institutional review board; this board must include each of the following panel members EXCEPT
- a. a scientist.
 - b. a nonscientist.
 - c. a person who is not affiliated with the institution.
 - d. a government official.

ANS: D DIF: Medium REF: Ethical Concerns in Social Psychology
OBJ: Factual

49. A person volunteers to participate in an experiment but is not told anything about what the experiment involved until after it was finished. The failure to inform this person about the experiment violates which ethical principle in research?
- a. institutional review board
 - b. informed consent
 - c. deception research
 - d. debriefing

ANS: B DIF: Medium REF: Ethical Concerns in Social Psychology
OBJ: Applied

50. Debriefing participants after an experiment is completed is always an important step in the experimental procedure. However, debriefing is particularly important when _____.
- a. deception is used.
 - b. an institutional review board has not reviewed the study.

- c. a monetary reward is given.
- d. informed consent has not been obtained.

ANS: A DIF: Medium REF: Ethical Concerns in Social Psychology
OBJ: Conceptual

TRUE/FALSE

1. The dependent variable in an experiment is the variable that is being manipulated to produce a predicted outcome.

ANS: F DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

2. The primary difference between natural experiments and more typical laboratory experiments is that natural experiments do not normally involve random assignment.

ANS: T DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Factual

3. While conducting observational research, social psychologists often conduct additional follow-up studies to support what they have observed in the field.

ANS: T DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

4. Assigning everyone in a population an equal chance of being selected for a survey is not necessary for generating a random sample in a survey.

ANS: F DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

5. An issue of *Time* magazine cites a study that shows that married people are generally happier than unmarried people. Based on this study, we can assume that being married leads to being happy.

ANS: F DIF: Difficult REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Applied

6. Data from a study that is biased is sometimes worse than no information at all.

ANS: T DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

7. An experimental research study is the best way to establish a causal effect of one variable on another variable.

ANS: T DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?
OBJ: Conceptual

8. A field experiment is one of the best ways to ensure having good external validity in a research study.

ANS: T DIF: Easy
REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

9. A research study does not need to be submitted to an institutional review board as long as the study does not use deception as part of the study design.

ANS: F DIF: Medium REF: Ethical Concerns in Social Psychology

OBJ: Applied

10. Using deception in social psychology experiments is never allowed because it violates the basic tenets of providing informed consent to participants.

ANS: F DIF: Difficult REF: Ethical Concerns in Social Psychology

OBJ: Applied

SHORT ANSWER

1. What are the differences between a natural experiment and an experiment conducted in the laboratory? Describe the advantages and disadvantages of each.

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?

OBJ: Applied

2. Describe the following research methods in social psychology: observational, archival, and survey. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each method?

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Easy REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?

OBJ: Applied

3. What is the goal of correlational research? What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of this type research?

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?

OBJ: Applied

4. What are the advantages and disadvantages of experimental research compared with other types of research methods (observational, archival, survey, and correlational)?

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Medium REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?

OBJ: Applied

5. Describe the necessary components of a good experiment.

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Easy

REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?

OBJ: Conceptual

6. Why is random sampling so important to conducting research in social psychology? What are some of the potential pitfalls of not having a random sample when conducting research?

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Difficult

REF: How Do Social Psychologists Test Ideas?

OBJ: Conceptual

7. What are the benefits to both the investigator and the participant of conducting a debriefing after the conclusion of a study?

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Medium

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Applied

8. What does it mean when there is a statistically significant relationship between two variables?

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Difficult

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Applied

9. Describe the types of concerns that an investigator might have about conducting a study with poor external validity.

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Medium

REF: Some Other Useful Concepts for Understanding Research

OBJ: Conceptual

10. What is the purpose of an institutional review board? What function does this board serve?

ANS:

Answers will vary

DIF: Difficult

REF: Ethical Concerns in Social Psychology

OBJ: Applied