

RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY

SESSION 4

UNDERSTANDING THE RESEARCH PROCESS

- Aim. Procedure. Findings

Research in psychology

The Pygmalion effect (Rosenthal and Jacobson 1968)

Professor Robert Rosenthal, of Harvard University in the USA, and Leonore Jacobson, a principal of an elementary school in San Francisco, carried out an interesting field experiment to determine whether teachers' expectations of students' performance actually had any effect on how well the students learned throughout the year. In other words, when teachers expect students to excel or fail, is that what is going to happen?

To begin their study, Rosenthal and Jacobson gave 18 classes of students (from kindergarten to sixth grade) an intelligence test so that the researchers could see if there was a development during the year in which they carried out the study. Then they chose 20 per cent of the students at random and told the teachers that these children showed "unusual potential for intellectual growth", and that they could be expected to "bloom"

during the year. However, because they were randomly selected, there was no relationship whatsoever between the score they achieved on the test and this claim made by the psychologists.

At the end of the school year, the students were retested. Those labelled as intelligent showed a significantly greater increase in test scores than the other children who were not singled out for the teacher's attention. The researchers explained this by the "self-fulfilling prophecy"—that is, the teachers' expectations influenced the performance of the students.

You can read more about the study on the following websites.

- http://fcis.oise.utoronto.ca/~daniel_sc/assignment1/1968rosenjacob.html
- www.ntlf.com/html/pi/9902/pygm_1.htm

SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

- Our endeavour is to carry a research on the entire target group therefore our sample must be representative of that (target population).
- Random Sampling: Assigning numbers to people and choosing the sample by randomly choosing numbers, etc.
- Convenience Sampling: Where it's easy to establish contact and persuade people to join a research
- Stratified Sampling:
- Cluster Sampling: Choosing a locality, etc
- Purposive Sampling: Individuals who are expected to offer the most detailed or subjective information will be approached
- Snowball Sampling: for example: motivating factors behind illegal drug use

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Public Announcement

**WE WILL PAY YOU \$4.00 FOR
ONE HOUR OF YOUR TIME**

Persons Needed for a Study of Memory

*We will pay five hundred New Haven men to help us complete a scientific study of memory and learning. The study is being done at Yale University.

*Each person who participates will be paid \$4.00 (plus 50c carfare) for approximately 1 hour's time. We need you for only one hour: there are no further obligations. You may choose the time you would like to come (evenings, weekdays, or weekends).

***No special training, education, or experience is needed. We want:**

Factory workers	Businessmen	Construction workers
City employees	Clerks	Salespeople
Laborers	Professional people	White-collar workers
Barbers	Telephone workers	Others

All persons must be between the ages of 20 and 50. High school and college students cannot be used.

*If you meet these qualifications, fill out the coupon below and mail it now to Professor Stanley Milgram, Department of Psychology, Yale University, New Haven. You will be notified later of the specific time and place of the study. We reserve the right to decline any application.

*You will be paid \$4.00 (plus 50c carfare) as soon as you arrive at the laboratory.

METHODS

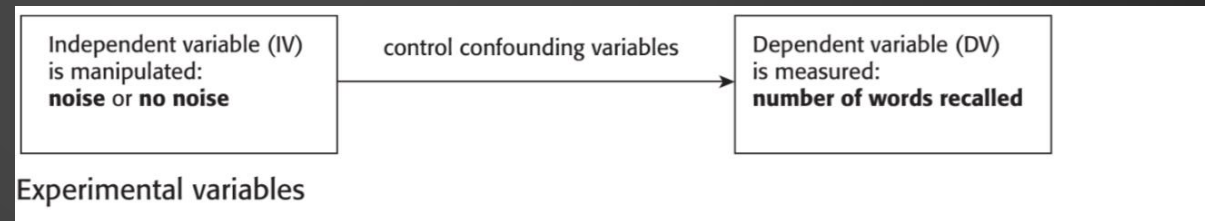
- Quantitative: Mainly to test a theory.
- This method assumes that variables can be identified and the relationship between them measured using statistics, to infer a cause and effect relationship
- Experiments and Correlational studies
- Evaluation: Validity and Reliability

QUALITATIVE METHOD

- Can describe but not explain behaviour
- Its not generally intended to be generalized

METHODS OF COLLECTING AND ANALYSING DATA: EXPERIMENT

- Variables: independent, dependent and confounding
- Research Hypothesis and Null Hypothesis
- Treatment Group, Control Group and Placebo Control Group



TYPES OF EXPERIMENT

- Lab Experiment

- Field Experiment

In a well-known field experiment, Piliavin and Rodin (1969) investigated helping behaviour in the New York subway. They used a confederate (i.e. an accomplice of the experimenter) who collapsed in front of people on the subway. The researchers wanted to study people's willingness to help the person. The confederate was either sober and held a cane (the lame condition), or appeared drunk and held a bottle (the drunk condition). The researchers found that people were much more likely to help the person in the lame condition (90 per cent) than in the drunk condition (20 per cent). This was in line with their predictions. A strength of the field experiment is that it has ecological validity; but a limitation is that the researchers cannot control all the variables.

HOW IS EXPERIMENT MADE MORE RELIABLE AND VALID

- To avoid demand characteristics... Single blind study
- To avoid researcher bias....double blind study