

## PSYCHOLOGICAL METHODS

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**Abstract:** Psychology is a scientific study of the human mind, mental processes, and behavior. It is called a scientific study because psychologists also do various systematic research and experiments to study and formulate psychological theories like other scientists. Psychological researches involve understanding complex mental processes, human behavior, and collecting different types of data (physiological, psychological, physical, and demographic data), psychologists use various research methods as it is difficult to obtain accurate and reliable results if we use a single research method for collecting research data. The type of method they use depends upon the type of research. Broadly, researches are divided into two types, i.e., experimental and non-experimental researches. Experimental researches involve two or more variables, and it studies the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (cause-effect relationship), whereas non-experimental researches do not involve the manipulations of variables. The concept of variables is briefly explained further in this article. Let's get familiar with some widely used methods of collecting psychology research data.

**Key words:** *test, ask, answer, anceta*

### Introduction

**Experimental:** To understand the experimental method, firstly we need to be familiar with the term 'variable.' A variable is an event or stimulus that varies, and its values can be measured. It is to be noted that we can not regard any object as a variable; in fact, the attributes related to that object are called variables. For example, A person is not a variable, but the height of the person is a variable because different people may have different heights. In the experiment method of data collection, we mainly concern with two types of variables, i.e., independent variables and dependent variables. If the value of the variable is manipulated by the researcher to observe its effects, then it is called the independent variable, and the variable that is affected by the change in the independent variable is called the dependent variable. For example, if we want to study the influence of alcohol on the reaction time and driving abilities of the driver, then the amount of alcohol that the driver consumes is the independent variable, and the driving performance of the driver is called the dependent variable. Experimental methods are conducted to establish the relationship between the independent variable (cause) and dependent variables (effect). The experiments are conducted very carefully, and any variables other than the independent variable are kept constant or negligible so that an accurate relationship between the cause and effect can be established. In the above

example, other factors like the driver's stress, anxiety, or mood (extraneous variables) can interfere with the dependent variable (driving ability). It is difficult to avoid these extraneous variables; extraneous variables are the undesired variables that are not studied under the experiments, and their manipulation can alter the results of the study, but we should always try to make them constant or negligible for accurate results.

Lab experiment: It is difficult to conduct some experiments in natural settings as many extraneous variables can become a problem for the research. So, researchers conduct the experiments in a controlled manner in laboratories or research centers. It is easy to manage the independent and dependent variables in the controlled settings. For example, if the researcher wants to study the effect of different kinds of music like pop, classical, etc., on the health of the patients, then the researcher will conduct this study in a room rather than in a natural environment as it's easy to keep extraneous variables constant in the closed settings. Here, music is the independent variable and health is the dependent variable. If the same experiment is conducted outside the lab, then extraneous variables like sunlight, weather, noise, etc., may interfere with the study and manipulate the results of the research.

Field experiment: Sometimes, lab experiment results face criticism for their lack of generalizability as they are not conducted in real-life settings. Field experiments are conducted in the natural environment and real-life settings like schools, industries, hospitals, etc., so they are more ecologically valid than lab experiments. For example, if we want to study whether classroom learning or open environment learning is the best teaching method for students, the researcher would prefer the field experiment over the lab experiment. However, in field experiments, it is very difficult to control the undesired or extraneous variables, which makes it difficult to establish an accurate cause-effect relationship. Moreover, they consume more time than the lab experiments.

### **Conclusion**

- Psychological testing is also known as psychometrics. Psychological tests are scientifically proven and standardized tests that are constructed by psychologists. These are used to assess the various characteristics of humans such as attitude, aptitude, personality, intelligence quotient, and emotional quotient. There are many psychological tests available these days such as aptitude testing, mental health assessment, educational testing, personality assessment, etc., which are used for different purposes. The multiple-choice questions (MCQs) of the psychological tests are carefully designed, and the factors like gender, age, class, qualification, etc., are considered before conducting these tests. Psychological tests can be conducted offline (pen-paper-based) or online (digital format), depending upon the applicability and availability. The necessary part of the psychological tests is that the participants or the subjects, upon whom the test is conducted, should be properly informed about the testing procedure, and proper instructions about marking or filling the test, time durations of the test, should be verbally provided to them for their better understanding. These tests are constructed by following a systematic approach and three important

factors, i.e., validity, reliability, and norms. These are briefly discussed below. Validity: The most obvious criterion of constructing the test is that it should be valid. The validity of the test implies that the test should measure what it is designed for. For example, the psychological health assessment test should measure the psychological health of the person rather than the physical health.

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