

A COMPARISON OF PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS

Method	Description	Advantage (s)	Disadvantage (s)
<i>Experimental Research</i>	Investigation of the relationship of two or more factors (variables) by deliberately producing a change in one factor and observing the effects of that change on other aspects of the situation	Show causal relationships	Controlling a situation may influence how subjects behave and respond
<i>Naturalistic Observation</i>	Researcher simply observes some naturally occurring behavior and does not intervene	See what people do in their “natural habitat”	Can’t control factors that are of interest People may act differently if they know they’re being watched
<i>Survey Research</i>	People are asked questions about their behavior, thoughts, and attitudes	Get a great deal of information in a relatively short period of time Apply results to a large population	People may not be willing to reveal their true feelings People’s responses may be what they think the researcher wants to hear
<i>Correlational Research</i>	Study the relationship between two variables to see if they’re associated/correlated	Find links between variables that might not be apparent	Cannot determine cause and effect
<i>Case Study</i>	An in-depth, intensive investigation of an individual or group	Gather a tremendous amount of information	Cannot generalize the results