

CED Fundamentals of Psychology Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. What factor is intentionally changed in an experiment to observe its effects?**
 - A. Dependent variable**
 - B. Random variable**
 - C. Independent variable**
 - D. Confounding variable**
- 2. What method is used to identify self-reported attitudes within a demographic?**
 - A. Anecdotal evidence**
 - B. Survey**
 - C. Naturalistic observation**
 - D. Controlled experiment**
- 3. In psychological research, which term is used to define the consistency of measurements over time?**
 - A. Validity**
 - B. Reliability**
 - C. Reactivity**
 - D. Generalizability**
- 4. What phenomenon describes the tendency for extreme scores to revert back towards the average upon retesting?**
 - A. Regression Toward the Mean**
 - B. Standard Deviation**
 - C. Statistical Significance**
 - D. Random Error**
- 5. In psychological research, what is a hypothesis?**
 - A. A definitive outcome from a study**
 - B. A testable prediction**
 - C. A summary of experiment results**
 - D. A final conclusion drawn from data**

- 6. Which sampling method allows each member of a population an equal chance of being included?**
- A. Systematic sampling**
 - B. Convenience sampling**
 - C. Random sampling**
 - D. Quota sampling**
- 7. In an experiment, what is the group that receives the treatment called?**
- A. Control group**
 - B. Experimental group**
 - C. Comparison group**
 - D. Random group**
- 8. What does a large effect size indicate about the relationship between two variables?**
- A. The relationship is weak and not important**
 - B. The independent variable has a strong impact on the dependent variable**
 - C. The result has no significance**
 - D. The variables are unrelated**
- 9. What term refers to the process of repeating a research study with different participants to verify findings?**
- A. Sample**
 - B. Validity**
 - C. Replication**
 - D. Survey**
- 10. What must be true for a score to be identified as the mode?**
- A. It must be the highest score.**
 - B. It must appear most frequently in the distribution.**
 - C. It must be the average of all scores.**
 - D. It must separate the distribution in two equal halves.**

Answers

SAMPLE

1. C
2. B
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. C
7. B
8. B
9. C
10. B

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Explanations

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1. What factor is intentionally changed in an experiment to observe its effects?

- A. Dependent variable**
- B. Random variable**
- C. Independent variable**
- D. Confounding variable**

In an experiment, the independent variable is the factor that researchers intentionally manipulate to observe its effects on other variables. This variable is considered independent because it is changed or controlled by the experimenter, allowing them to determine how variations in this factor influence the outcomes, or dependent variables. For example, if a researcher is studying the effect of different amounts of sunlight on plant growth, the amount of sunlight received would be the independent variable. By systematically altering this factor, the researcher can assess how it impacts other aspects, such as plant height or leaf growth, which represent the dependent variables. The independent variable's manipulation is crucial, as it establishes a cause-and-effect relationship within the context of the experiment. It is essential to clearly identify and control this variable to draw valid conclusions about the influence it has on the outcomes being measured.

2. What method is used to identify self-reported attitudes within a demographic?

- A. Anecdotal evidence**
- B. Survey**
- C. Naturalistic observation**
- D. Controlled experiment**

Surveys are a common and effective method used to identify self-reported attitudes within a demographic. They typically consist of standardized questions that can be administered to a large group of people, allowing researchers to collect data on individuals' beliefs, opinions, and feelings about various topics. This method is beneficial because it enables the collection of quantitative data that can be analyzed statistically, providing insights into patterns and trends across different demographic groups. Surveys can take various forms, such as questionnaires or interviews, and allow for the gathering of rich information while remaining relatively easy to analyze. By using this method, researchers can explore how attitudes may vary based on certain demographics such as age, gender, income, or education level, effectively identifying patterns and correlations in self-reported attitudes. This structured approach also helps minimize biases that might arise from less systematic methods.

3. In psychological research, which term is used to define the consistency of measurements over time?

A. Validity

B. Reliability

C. Reactivity

D. Generalizability

The term that defines the consistency of measurements over time is reliability. In psychological research, reliability refers to the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. This means that if the same study or measurement is repeated under the same conditions, it should yield similar outcomes. High reliability is crucial because it ensures that the findings of a study can be trusted as they are not due to random variations. For example, if a psychological test is designed to measure anxiety levels, it should provide similar scores for the same individual when administered multiple times, assuming their anxiety level has not changed. There are various methods to measure reliability, including test-retest reliability, inter-rater reliability, and internal consistency. While validity pertains to whether a test measures what it intends to measure, reliability specifically addresses the consistency of the measurement itself. Reactivity refers to changes in behavior when participants know they are being studied, and generalizability involves the extent to which research findings can be applied to settings beyond the study context. Thus, reliability is foundational in psychology as it underpins the credibility and interpretability of research results.

4. What phenomenon describes the tendency for extreme scores to revert back towards the average upon retesting?

A. Regression Toward the Mean

B. Standard Deviation

C. Statistical Significance

D. Random Error

The phenomenon described is known as regression toward the mean. This concept reflects the tendency for individuals with extreme scores—whether high or low—on a measure to have scores that are closer to the average upon subsequent measurements. When conducting tests or observations, it is common to see that those who perform exceptionally well or poorly are likely to have more average performances in later assessments. This occurs because extreme scores can be influenced by various factors, such as situational specifics or measurement errors. Regression toward the mean is significant in interpreting test results because it helps to indicate that not all changes in scores are due to genuine changes in ability or performance; rather, some changes might be due merely to statistical probability. Understanding this principle can help practitioners avoid misinterpreting the effects of interventions based solely on one-time measurements, particularly in clinical settings or research studies where repeated measures are common. This statistical phenomenon underscores the importance of context and variability when assessing individuals' performance over time.

5. In psychological research, what is a hypothesis?

- A. A definitive outcome from a study**
- B. A testable prediction**
- C. A summary of experiment results**
- D. A final conclusion drawn from data**

A hypothesis is a testable prediction about the relationship between two or more variables. In psychological research, it serves as a foundational element that guides the study. Researchers formulate hypotheses based on existing theories or observations, seeking to explore and validate these predictions through empirical investigation. By presenting a clear and specific hypothesis, researchers establish a framework for their studies, allowing them to gather data in a structured way. The testable nature of a hypothesis means that it can be supported or refuted through experimentation and observation, which is crucial for advancing scientific knowledge. The other options describe different aspects of the research process. A definitive outcome and a summary of experiment results reflect stages after research is conducted, while a final conclusion drawn from data indicates the end of the research analysis phase, not the initial phase where hypotheses are created and tested. Therefore, the correct identification of a hypothesis as a testable prediction highlights its critical role in guiding research inquiries in psychology.

6. Which sampling method allows each member of a population an equal chance of being included?

- A. Systematic sampling**
- B. Convenience sampling**
- C. Random sampling**
- D. Quota sampling**

Random sampling is a method that ensures every individual in the population has an equal opportunity to be included in the sample. This technique is foundational in research design because it minimizes selection bias and enhances the generalizability of the findings. By giving each member an equal chance to be selected, researchers can be more confident that their sample represents the larger population, which aids in drawing valid conclusions and making reliable inferences. The approach typically involves using randomization techniques, such as a random number generator or drawing names from a hat, to select participants. This contrasts with other sampling methods that lack this equal chance component, which can lead to skewed results and limit the applicability of the research outcomes. For example, systematic sampling follows a fixed interval to choose participants, convenience sampling selects individuals based on ease of access, and quota sampling aims to represent certain characteristics of the population but does not provide equal opportunity to all individuals.

7. In an experiment, what is the group that receives the treatment called?

- A. Control group**
- B. Experimental group**
- C. Comparison group**
- D. Random group**

The group that receives the treatment in an experiment is referred to as the experimental group. This designation is essential because this group is subjected to the independent variable that the researcher is studying, which allows for the observation of any effects that the treatment may have. It's important to differentiate this group from others in the study, such as the control group, which does not receive the treatment and is used for comparison purposes. By measuring differences in outcomes between the experimental group and the control group, researchers can more accurately determine the effectiveness of the treatment being tested. The experimental group is crucial for demonstrating the cause-and-effect relationship that is often sought in experimental research.

8. What does a large effect size indicate about the relationship between two variables?

- A. The relationship is weak and not important**
- B. The independent variable has a strong impact on the dependent variable**
- C. The result has no significance**
- D. The variables are unrelated**

A large effect size indicates that the independent variable has a strong impact on the dependent variable. In statistical analyses, effect size measures the magnitude of the difference or the strength of the relationship between variables. When the effect size is large, it suggests that changes in the independent variable lead to substantial changes in the dependent variable. This has important implications for research findings, as it can help researchers and practitioners understand the practical significance of their results beyond merely detecting a statistically significant difference. Understanding effect size is crucial in the field of psychology, as it guides intervention strategies and the overall understanding of the phenomena being studied.

9. What term refers to the process of repeating a research study with different participants to verify findings?

- A. Sample**
- B. Validity**
- C. Replication**
- D. Survey**

The correct term that refers to the process of repeating a research study with different participants to verify findings is replication. Replication is an essential aspect of the scientific method as it helps establish the reliability and generalizability of research results. When researchers replicate a study, they seek to determine whether the same results can be observed under similar conditions using different samples. This process helps confirm the findings and strengthens the validity of the original research, as consistency across different populations supports the conclusion drawn from the initial study. In the context of this question, validity refers to the accuracy of a study's measurements and conclusions but does not specifically denote the act of repeating a study. A sample refers to the group of participants chosen for the study, while a survey is a method of data collection, commonly using questionnaires. None of these terms captures the essence of repeating a research study to verify findings as effectively as replication does.

10. What must be true for a score to be identified as the mode?

- A. It must be the highest score.**
- B. It must appear most frequently in the distribution.**
- C. It must be the average of all scores.**
- D. It must separate the distribution in two equal halves.**

For a score to be identified as the mode, it must appear most frequently in the distribution. The mode is a measure of central tendency that identifies the value that occurs with the highest frequency in a data set. This means that regardless of the actual value of the scores or their magnitude, the key characteristic of the mode is its frequency of occurrence compared to other values. In contrast, other measures of central tendency, such as the mean and median, operate under different principles. The mean is the average of all scores and requires summing all the values and dividing by their total count, while the median is defined as the middle score that separates the higher half of the data from the lower half. Therefore, the frequency-based nature of the mode is what distinguishes it as a unique measure in statistics.