

New CED - Research Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. What is the term for the agreement required from a person unable to give legal consent to participate in a study?**
 - A. Parental consent**
 - B. Informed consent**
 - C. Informed assent**
 - D. Voluntary consent**
- 2. Which of the following best illustrates the concept of valid measurement?**
 - A. A thermometer measuring temperature precisely**
 - B. A ruler that changes its length**
 - C. A survey that collects data on irrelevant factors**
 - D. A clock that is consistently fast**
- 3. Which term describes a distribution of data where scores cluster towards one end of the range rather than being evenly distributed?**
 - A. Normal distribution**
 - B. Skewed distribution**
 - C. Uniform distribution**
 - D. Bi-modal distribution**
- 4. Which of the following describes the tendency for extreme or unusual scores to revert to the average?**
 - A. Normal distribution**
 - B. Regression toward the mean**
 - C. Standard deviation**
 - D. Outlier effect**
- 5. In research design, what is the main objective of employing ethical guidelines?**
 - A. To maximize results**
 - B. To maintain discipline**
 - C. To ensure the integrity and welfare of participants**
 - D. To simplify data analysis**

- 6. What aspect of research does random assignment help to minimize?**
- A. Bias in the research process**
 - B. Sample size variability**
 - C. Participant dropout**
 - D. Confounding variables**
- 7. What is meant by random assignment in research?**
- A. Selecting groups based on specific characteristics**
 - B. Assigning participants to groups by chance**
 - C. Creating strata for analysis**
 - D. Limiting sample size**
- 8. In experimental research, what is the term for an individual who acts as a participant but is actually part of the study setup?**
- A. Confederate**
 - B. Debriefing**
 - C. Control group**
 - D. Manipulated variable**
- 9. What is a primary characteristic of reliability in psychological testing?**
- A. It measures the intended construct**
 - B. It is free from bias**
 - C. It produces consistent results**
 - D. It is adaptable to different populations**
- 10. Which type of group is not exposed to the independent variable in an experiment?**
- A. Experimental group**
 - B. Control group**
 - C. Random group**
 - D. Test group**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

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Explanations

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1. What is the term for the agreement required from a person unable to give legal consent to participate in a study?

- A. Parental consent**
- B. Informed consent**
- C. Informed assent**
- D. Voluntary consent**

The correct answer is informed assent. Informed assent refers to the process of obtaining agreement from individuals who are unable to give full legal consent—such as minors or individuals with certain cognitive impairments—to participate in a study. This process typically involves providing the individual with age-appropriate information about the study, ensuring that they understand what participation involves, and confirming that they are willing to participate to the best of their ability. Parental consent is needed for individuals who cannot legally consent but does not specifically address the individuals themselves. Informed consent, on the other hand, is the process used when an individual is able to give legal consent themselves, while voluntary consent emphasizes the requirement that participation is free from coercion. Informed assent bridges the need for ethical research practices by recognizing the capacity of individuals to affirmatively agree to participate, even when they are not legally allowed to provide consent themselves.

2. Which of the following best illustrates the concept of valid measurement?

- A. A thermometer measuring temperature precisely**
- B. A ruler that changes its length**
- C. A survey that collects data on irrelevant factors**
- D. A clock that is consistently fast**

The concept of valid measurement focuses on the accuracy and relevance of what is being measured in relation to the intended purpose. A thermometer measuring temperature precisely exemplifies valid measurement because it accurately reflects the temperature being measured, providing true and relevant data. The precision of the thermometer ensures that the readings are reliable and can be trusted for making decisions based on temperature, which is crucial in many scientific and everyday contexts. In contrast, other options illustrate various issues with measurement validity. A ruler that changes its length does not provide a stable reference for measurement, making it unreliable. A survey that collects data on irrelevant factors fails to gather pertinent information that addresses the research question, thus compromising the validity of the findings. Similarly, a clock that is consistently fast does not convey the correct time, leading to misleading conclusions about time-related activities. In summary, valid measurement requires both accuracy and relevance, as demonstrated clearly by the thermometer example.

3. Which term describes a distribution of data where scores cluster towards one end of the range rather than being evenly distributed?

A. Normal distribution

B. Skewed distribution

C. Uniform distribution

D. Bi-modal distribution

A distribution of data where scores cluster towards one end of the range, creating a lack of symmetry, is referred to as a skewed distribution. This type of distribution can take on two forms—positive skew, where the tail of the distribution extends towards the higher values, and negative skew, where the tail extends towards the lower values. In skewed distributions, the mean is influenced by the extreme scores in the tail, leading to a situation where the mean, median, and mode may differ significantly. Understanding this concept is essential because it reflects how data is not evenly spread out and can reveal trends or outliers that are not immediately apparent in more symmetrical distributions. In contrast, a normal distribution is characterized by its bell-shaped curve where data points are symmetrically distributed around the mean, and a uniform distribution has all scores equally represented throughout the range. A bi-modal distribution, on the other hand, has two different modes or peaks, indicating that two different groups or phenomena may be present within the data. Thus, the term that accurately describes the clustering of data towards one end of the range is indeed skewed distribution.

4. Which of the following describes the tendency for extreme or unusual scores to revert to the average?

A. Normal distribution

B. Regression toward the mean

C. Standard deviation

D. Outlier effect

The concept of regression toward the mean is a statistical phenomenon that describes how extreme or unusual outcomes in a data set tend to move closer to the average upon subsequent measurements or observations. This means that if a score is significantly higher or lower than the average, the next score is likely to be closer to that average. This tendency is observed in a variety of situations, such as sports performances, test scores, and many other scenarios where variability exists. For instance, if an athlete has a particularly outstanding performance (an extreme score), their next performance is more likely to be closer to their typical performance level (the mean), rather than another exceptional result. This principle highlights that in repeated measurements, extreme values often do not continue to occur at the same frequency but rather move towards the average, illustrating a natural balancing process in random variables. Understanding this concept is essential for accurately interpreting data and recognizing that not all anomalies or extremes are indicative of long-term trends. It is a key component in the analysis of variability and prediction in statistics.

5. In research design, what is the main objective of employing ethical guidelines?

- A. To maximize results**
- B. To maintain discipline**
- C. To ensure the integrity and welfare of participants**
- D. To simplify data analysis**

The main objective of employing ethical guidelines in research design is to ensure the integrity and welfare of participants. Ethical guidelines are established to protect individuals involved in research, addressing issues such as informed consent, privacy, and potential harm. By adhering to these standards, researchers can uphold the rights and dignity of participants, fostering trust and promoting responsible conduct within the research community. Furthermore, ethical guidelines help maintain the credibility of research findings by promoting rigorous oversight and accountability, which contribute to the overall integrity of the research process. This focus on participant welfare is essential in building a foundation for ethical research practices, ensuring that participants are treated with respect and that their rights are safeguarded throughout the study.

6. What aspect of research does random assignment help to minimize?

- A. Bias in the research process**
- B. Sample size variability**
- C. Participant dropout**
- D. Confounding variables**

Random assignment is a crucial technique used in research to help ensure that participants in different groups are equivalent at the outset of an experiment. By randomly assigning participants to treatment or control groups, researchers can minimize biases that might affect the results, leading to more valid conclusions about the effects of the treatment being studied. Specifically, bias in the research process, such as selection bias, can occur when participants are not evenly distributed across groups. This can happen if there are systematic differences between those who get assigned to one group versus another. Random assignment helps to distribute these characteristics evenly by giving each participant an equal chance of being placed in any group, thus making it less likely that the groups differ in meaningful ways that could skew results. While the other options address important aspects of research, they are not directly related to the purpose of random assignment. Random assignment does not necessarily reduce sample size variability, participant dropout, or confounding variables, although it may help mitigate confounding by creating more balanced groups. However, it primarily serves to reduce bias, ensuring more reliable and robust findings in experimental research.

7. What is meant by random assignment in research?

- A. Selecting groups based on specific characteristics
- B. Assigning participants to groups by chance**
- C. Creating strata for analysis
- D. Limiting sample size

Random assignment refers to the process of allocating participants to different groups in a study purely by chance, rather than through any specific criteria or characteristics. This method is essential for establishing a baseline of equality among groups before any interventions or treatments are applied. By using random assignment, researchers can ensure that each participant has an equal opportunity to be placed in any group, which helps control for variables that could bias the results. This approach enhances the validity of the research findings by minimizing pre-existing differences between groups that could affect the outcomes. Because the assignment is random, it theoretically balances out all identified and unidentified confounding variables across the groups, leading to more reliable and generalizable results. In contrast, selecting groups based on specific characteristics or creating strata for analysis does not allow for the same level of equal representation and may introduce systematic biases. Limiting sample size, on the other hand, reduces the overall power and reliability of the study's findings, which is not aligned with the principle of random assignment aimed at ensuring robust statistical outcomes. Therefore, the defining characteristic of random assignment is that it is a chance-based method of participant allocation.

8. In experimental research, what is the term for an individual who acts as a participant but is actually part of the study setup?

- A. Confederate**
- B. Debriefing
- C. Control group
- D. Manipulated variable

In experimental research, the term for an individual who acts as a participant but is actually part of the study setup is a confederate. Confederates are strategically used by researchers to create specific scenarios or manipulate social interactions within the experiment. Their role is to engage with genuine participants while following a predetermined script or set of instructions. This enables researchers to observe reactions and behaviors in a controlled environment, adding depth to the data collected. Understanding the role of a confederate is crucial as it allows researchers to investigate various psychological phenomena, such as social influence, conformity, and behavioral responses, without the participant being aware that they are part of the manipulation. This method helps maintain the integrity of the experimental design and enhances the validity of the findings. Other terms like debriefing, control group, and manipulated variable serve different functions in experimental research and do not refer to individuals posing as participants within the study.

9. What is a primary characteristic of reliability in psychological testing?

- A. It measures the intended construct**
- B. It is free from bias**
- C. It produces consistent results**
- D. It is adaptable to different populations**

In psychological testing, a primary characteristic of reliability is that it produces consistent results. This means that if the same test is administered multiple times under similar conditions, it should yield the same or very similar scores. Consistency is essential for psychological tests because it indicates that the test is stable over time and not significantly affected by random fluctuations or situational variables. Reliable tests generate trustworthy data, which is crucial for researchers and practitioners who rely on these results to make informed decisions about an individual's psychological traits, abilities, or conditions. For example, if a test designed to measure anxiety levels yields drastically different scores across multiple administrations, it raises concerns about the test's reliability and its ability to accurately assess anxiety. While measures of validity (how well a test measures what it claims to measure), the absence of bias, and adaptability to different populations are important aspects of psychological testing, they do not specifically define reliability. Reliability focuses primarily on the repeatability and consistency of results, which is a foundational aspect of creating valid and useful assessments in psychology.

10. Which type of group is not exposed to the independent variable in an experiment?

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

The control group is not exposed to the independent variable in an experiment because it serves as a baseline for comparison against the experimental group, which does experience the independent variable. By keeping the control group free from the treatment or manipulation that the experimental group receives, researchers can determine the effect of the independent variable more accurately. This helps to isolate the variable being tested and ensures that any changes observed in the experimental group can be attributed to that variable rather than to other factors. The presence of a control group is crucial in experimental design to validate the results and ensure the reliability of the conclusions drawn from the experiment.