Research Methods in Psychology

CREDIT HOURS
3

LEVEL
UPPER

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Before You Choose This UExcel Exam

**Uses for the Examination**

- Excelsior College, the test developer, recommends granting three (3) semester hours of upper-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination. The examination satisfies the research requirement in the sociology concentration of the Excelsior College baccalaureate degrees in Liberal Arts. Excelsior College baccalaureate-level nursing students should consult their advisors regarding duplication of credit with the Research in Nursing exam.

- Other colleges and universities also recognize this exam as a basis for granting credit or advanced standing.

- Individual institutions set their own policies for the amount of credit awarded and the minimum acceptable grade.

Exam-takers who have applied to Excelsior College should ask their academic advisor where this exam fits within their degree program.

Exam-takers not enrolled in an Excelsior College degree program should check with the institution from which they wish to receive credit to determine whether credit will be granted and/or to find out the minimum grade required for credit. Those who intend to enroll at Excelsior College should ask an admissions counselor where this exam fits within their intended degree program.

**Examination Length and Scoring**

The examination consists of approximately 120 questions, most of which are multiple choice; for samples of all the item types on this exam, see the sample items in the back of this guide. Some items are unscored, pretest items. The pretest items are embedded throughout the exam and are indistinguishable from the scored items. You will have two (2) hours to complete the examination. Your score will be reported as a letter grade.

**UExcel Exam Resources**

**Excelsior College Bookstore**

The Excelsior College Bookstore offers recommended textbooks and other resources to help you prepare for UExcel exams.

The bookstore is available online at: [www.excelsior.edu/bookstore](http://www.excelsior.edu/bookstore)

**UExcel Practice Exams**

The official UExcel practice exams are highly recommended as part of your study plan. Once you register for your UExcel exam, you are eligible to purchase the corresponding practice exam, which can be taken using any computer with a supported Web browser. Each practice exam includes two forms that you may take within a 180-day period.
Excelsior College Library

Enrolled Excelsior College students can access millions of authoritative resources online through the Excelsior College Library. Created through our partnership with the Sheridan Libraries of The Johns Hopkins University, the library provides access to journal articles, books, websites, databases, reference services, and many other resources. Special library pages relate to the nursing degree exams and other selected exams. To access it, visit www.excelsior.edu/library (login is required).

Our library provides:

- 24/7 availability
- The world’s most current authoritative resources
- Help and support from staff librarians

Online Tutoring

Excelsior College offers online tutoring through SMARTTHINKING™ to connect with tutors who have been trained in a variety of academic subjects. To access SMARTTHINKING, go to www.excelsior.edu/smarthinking. Once there, you may download a copy of the SMARTTHINKING Student Handbook as a PDF.

MyExcelsior Community

MyExcelsior Community enables Excelsior College students and alumni to interact with their peers online. As members, students can participate in real-time chat groups, join online study groups, buy and sell used textbooks, and share Internet resources. Enrolled students have automatic access from their MyExcelsior page. Visit www.excelsior.edu/myexcelsiorcommunity.

Preparing for UExcel Exams

How Long Will It Take Me to Study?

A UExcel exam enables you to show that you’ve learned material comparable to one or more 15-week college-level courses. As an independent learner, you should study and review as much as you would for a college course. For a 3-credit course in a subject they don’t know, most students would be expected to study nine hours per week for 15 weeks, for a total of 135 hours.

Study Tips

Become an active user of the resource materials. Aim for understanding rather than memorization. The more active you are when you study, the more likely you will be to retain, understand, and apply the information.

The following techniques are generally considered to be active learning:

- **preview or survey** each chapter
- **highlight or underline text** you believe is important
- **write questions or comments** in the margins
- **practice re-stating content** in your own words
- **relate what you are reading** to the chapter title, section headings, and other organizing elements of the textbook
- **find ways to engage** your eyes, your ears, and your muscles, as well as your brain, in your studies
- **study with a partner or a small group** (if you are an enrolled student, search for partners on MyExcelsior Community)
- **prepare your review notes** as flashcards or create recordings that you can use while commuting or exercising

When you feel confident that you understand a content area, review what you have learned. Take a second look at the material to evaluate your understanding. If you have a study partner, the two of you can review by explaining the content to each other or writing test questions for each other to answer. Review questions from textbook chapters may be helpful for partner or individual study, as well.
Using UExcel Practice Exams

We recommend taking the first form of the practice exam when you begin studying, to see how much you already know. After taking the first practice exam, check your performance on each question and find out why your answer was right or wrong. This feedback will help you improve your knowledge of the subject and identify areas of weakness that you should address before taking the exam. Take the second form of the practice exam after you have finished studying. Analyze your results to identify the areas that you still need to review.

Although there is no guarantee, our research suggests that students who do well on the practice exams are more likely to pass the actual exam than those who do not do well (or do not take advantage of this opportunity).

About Test Preparation Services

Preparation for UExcel® exams and Excelsior College® Examinations, though based on independent study, is supported by Excelsior College with a comprehensive set of exam learning resources and services designed to help you succeed. These learning resources are prepared by Excelsior College so you can be assured that they are current and cover the content you are expected to master for the exams. These resources, and your desire to learn, are usually all that you will need to succeed.

There are test-preparation companies that will offer to help you study for our examinations. Some may imply a relationship with Excelsior College and/or make claims that their products and services are all that you need to prepare for our examinations.

Excelsior College is not affiliated with any test preparation firm and does not endorse the products or services of these companies. No test preparation vendor is authorized to provide admissions counseling or academic advising services, or to collect any payments, on behalf of Excelsior College. Excelsior College does not send authorized representatives to a student’s home nor does it review the materials provided by test preparation companies for content or compatibility with Excelsior College examinations.

To help you become a well-informed consumer, we suggest that before you make any purchase decision regarding study materials provided by organizations other than Excelsior College, you consider the points outlined on our website at www.excelsior.edu/testprep.

Preparing for This Exam

Prior Knowledge

A background in introductory psychology and elementary statistics is assumed.

Using the Content Outline

Each content area in the outline includes (1) the recommended minimum hours of study to devote to that content area and (2) the most important sections of the recommended resources for that area. These annotations are not intended to be comprehensive. You may need to refer to other chapters in the recommended textbooks. Chapter numbers and titles may differ in other editions.

This content outline contains examples of the types of information you should study. Although these examples are numerous, do not assume that everything on the exam will come from these examples. Conversely, do not expect that every detail you study will appear on the exam. Any exam is only a broad sample of all the questions that could be asked about the subject matter.

Using the Sample Questions and Rationales

Each content guide provides sample questions to illustrate those typically found on the exam. These questions are intended to give you an idea of the level of knowledge expected and the way questions are typically phrased. The sample questions do not sample the entire content of the exam and are not intended to serve as an entire practice test.
Recommended Resources for the UExcel Exam in Research Methods in Psychology

The study materials listed below are recommended by Excelsior College as the most appropriate resources to help you study for the examination. For information on ordering from the Excelsior College Bookstore, see page 1 of this guide. You may also find resource materials in college libraries. Public libraries may have some of the textbooks or may be able to obtain them through an interlibrary loan program.

You should allow sufficient time to obtain resources and to study before taking the exam.

Textbooks
The following textbook was used by the examination development committee to verify all questions on the exam. This resource may be purchased from the Excelsior College Bookstore.

www.excelsior.edu/bookstore


Open Educational Resources
The course combination below is lower level, but contains good material to supplement your study for this exam:

The Saylor Foundation provides free, high quality courses through online, self-paced, free learning resources.

Saylor Foundation: Research Methods and Research Methods Lab

Reducing Textbook Costs
Many students know it is less expensive to buy a used textbook, and buying a previous edition is also an option. The Excelsior College bookstore includes a buyback feature and a used book marketplace, as well as the ability to rent digital versions of textbooks for as long as students need them. Students are encouraged to explore these and the many other opportunities available online to help defray textbook costs.
General Description of the Examination

The UExcel Research Methods in Psychology examination is based on material typically taught in a one-semester upper-level course in research methods.

The examination measures knowledge and understanding of the scientific method, experimental psychology, research ethics, experimental and nonexperimental research designs, data analysis and interpretation, writing research reports, and the ability to apply this understanding in research situations.

Those beginning to study for this exam should be familiar with concepts generally covered in introductory psychology and elementary statistics.

Learning Outcomes

After you have successfully worked your way through the recommended study materials, you will be expected to demonstrate the ability to:

1. Distinguish between scientific and nonscientific research methodology.
2. Explain ethical principles as outlined in the American Psychological Association’s Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.
3. Explain the rudiments of survey research.
4. Distinguish among experimental research designs, quasi-experimental designs, and nonexperimental designs.
5. Explain the four levels of measurement (i.e., nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio).
6. Explain the importance of experimental validity and threats to internal and external validity of experiments.
7. Distinguish between-subject research designs from within-subject designs.
8. Explain the difference between descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.
9. Describe and demonstrate the purpose, major sections, and format of a research report.
Content Outline

The content outline describes the various areas of the test, similar to the way a syllabus outlines a course. To fully prepare requires self-direction and discipline. Study involves careful reading, reflection, and systematic review.

The major content areas on the Research Methods in Psychology examination, the percent of the examination, and the hours to devote to each content area are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Percent of the Examination</th>
<th>Hours of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Experimental Psychology and the Scientific Method</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Research Ethics (APA Guidelines)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Alternatives to Experimentation (Nonexperimental Designs)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Basic Concepts of Experimental Research</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Experimental Research Designs</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Data Analysis and Interpretation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Writing Research Reports</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Occasionally, examples will be listed for a content topic to help clarify that topic. However, the content of the examination is not limited to the specific examples given.

The chapter numbers and titles provided at the beginning of each content area refer to specific chapters in the recommended textbook for this examination (see page 4, Learning Resources). Chapter numbers and titles may differ in subsequent editions.

Chapter 6, Formulating the Hypothesis

A. Nonscientific vs. scientific methodology
   1. Nonscientific sources of data
   2. Characteristics of the scientific method

B. The tools of psychological science (Chapter 1)
   1. Observation
   2. Measurement
   3. Experimentation (establishing cause and effect)

C. Formulating the research hypothesis (Chapter 5)
   1. Characteristics of a good hypothesis
   2. Induction vs. deduction
   3. Review of previous research

I. Experimental Psychology and the Scientific Method

5 PERCENT OF EXAM     | 7 HOURS OF STUDY

Myers and Hansen (2012)

Chapter 1, Experimental Psychology and the Scientific Method
II. Research Ethics (American Psychological Association Guidelines)

Myers and Hansen:

Chapter 2, Research Ethics

A. Research with human participants
   1. Informed consent
   2. Deception and debriefing
   3. Institutional review boards

B. Research with animal subjects

C. Fraud and plagiarism

III. Alternatives to Experimentation (Nonexperimental designs)

Myers and Hansen

Chapter 3, Alternatives to Experimentation: Nonexperimental Designs

Chapter 4, Alternatives to Experimentation: Surveys and Interviews

Chapter 5, Alternatives to Experimentation: Correlational and Quasi-Experimental Designs

A. Survey research (Chapter 4)
   1. Characteristics of surveys (for example: interview, questionnaire)
   2. Response styles
   3. Sampling issues
      a. Probability sampling
      b. Nonprobability sampling

B. Correlational research (Chapter 5)
   1. Direction and strength of relationships
      a. Correlation coefficient
      b. Scatterplots
   2. Limitations
      a. Correlation does not prove causation.
      b. Direction of causality
      c. Third variable problems

C. Quasi-experimental designs (Chapter 5)
   1. Definition and characteristics of quasi-experimental designs
   2. Types of quasi-experimental designs
      a. Ex post facto designs
      b. Longitudinal designs
      c. Cross-sectional designs
      d. Pretest/posttest design
   3. Advantages and disadvantages of quasi-experimental designs

D. Other types of nonexperimental research (Chapter 3)
   1. Observational research/field studies
   2. Case studies
   3. Archival research/secondary records

E. Advantages and disadvantages of nonexperimental designs

IV. Basic Concepts of Experimental Research

Myers and Hansen

Chapter 7, The Basics of Experimentation

Chapter 8, Solving Problems: Controlling Extraneous Variables

Chapter 15, Drawing Conclusions: The Search for the Elusive Bottom Line

A. Measurement issues (Chapter 7)
   1. Independent and dependent variables
2. Operational definitions and hypothetical constructs

3. Scales of measurement
   a. Nominal
   b. Ordinal
   c. Interval
   d. Ratio

4. Reliability of measurement
   a. Interitem reliability
   b. Interrater reliability
   c. Test-retest reliability

5. Validity of measurement
   a. Construct validity
   b. Content validity
   c. Face validity
   d. Predictive validity

B. Internal validity (Chapters 7 and 8)
   1. Definition of internal validity
   2. Concepts related to internal validity — extraneous and confounding variables
      a. Characteristics of the setting (physical variables)
      b. Characteristics of the experimenter
         1) Experimenter bias
         2) Experimenter personality
         3) Selection of subjects
      c. Characteristics of the participants (subjects)
         1) Demand characteristics
         2) Volunteers
         3) "Good subject" bias
         4) Social desirability
   3. Specific threats to internal validity
      a. History
      b. Instrumentation
      c. Maturation
      d. Selection
      e. Selection interaction
      f. Statistical regression
      g. Subject mortality
      h. Testing
   4. Controlling for extraneous variables
      a. Single blind
      b. Double blind
      c. Placebo

C. External validity (Chapter 15)
   1. Definition of external validity
   2. Basic requirements for external validity
      a. Internal validity
      b. Replication
   3. Important external validity issues
      a. Generalizing across subjects
      b. Generalizing from procedures to concepts
      c. Generalizing beyond the lab
      d. Increasing external validity (five approaches)
         1) Aggregation
         2) Multivariate designs
         3) Nonreactive measures
         4) Field experiments
         5) Naturalistic observation
V. Experimental Research Designs

20 percent of exam  |  27 hours of study

Myers and Hansen

Chapter 9, Basic Between-Subjects Designs
Chapter 10, Between-Subjects Factorial Designs
Chapter 11, Within-Subjects Designs
Chapter 12, Within-Subjects Designs: Small N

A. Between-subjects designs (Chapter 9)
   1. One independent variable
      a. Two independent groups
         1) Random assignment
         2) Experimental group–control group design
         3) Two-experimental-groups design
      b. Two matched groups
      c. Multiple groups
   2. Factorial Designs (Chapter 10)
      a. Types of factorial designs — definitions/descriptions
      b. Main effects
      c. Interaction effects
      d. Describing the design (notation)

B. Within-subjects designs (Chapter 11)
   1. Types of within-subjects designs
      a. Definitions/descriptions
      b. One independent variable
      c. Multiple independent variables (factorial designs)
      d. Mixed designs
   2. Problems of within-subjects designs: order effects
      a. Carryover effects
      b. Fatigue and practice effects
   3. Controlling for order effects: counterbalancing

C. Small N Designs (Chapter 11)
   1. ABA designs
   2. Multiple-baseline design

D. Advantages and disadvantages of the various experimental designs

VI. Data Analysis and Interpretation

10 percent of exam  |  14 hours of study

Myers and Hansen

Chapter 13, Why We Need Statistics
Chapter 14, Analyzing Results
Chapter 15, Drawing Conclusions: The Search for the Elusive Bottom Line

NOTE: The focus in this section will be on selecting the appropriate analysis technique and interpreting the results of a data analysis. Questions will not focus on computation of statistics.

A. Descriptive statistics — organizing and summarizing data (Chapter 13)
   1. Frequency distributions
   2. Measures of central tendency
      a. Mean
      b. Median
      c. Mode
   3. Measures of variability
      a. Range
      b. Variance
      c. Standard deviation

B. Inferential Statistics/Hypothesis Testing
   1. Null vs. alternative hypotheses (Chapter 13)
   2. Odds of finding significance (Chapter 13)
      a. Significance levels
         1) Type I errors
         2) Type II errors
      b. Critical regions
c. One-tailed vs. two-tailed tests (directional vs. nondirectional hypotheses)

3. Comparing two groups (Chapter 14)
   a. Chi-square test
   b. \( t \) test

4. Comparing multiple groups (Chapter 14)
   a. One-way between-subjects ANOVA (one independent variable)
   b. One-way repeated measures ANOVA (one independent variable within subjects)
   c. Two-way ANOVA (between subjects, multiple independent variables)
   d. Repeated measures and mixed factorial designs

C. Evaluating research findings (Chapter 15)
   1. Internal validity
   2. External validity
   3. Interpreting a nonsignificant outcome

VII. Writing Research Reports

| 8 PERCENT OF EXAM | 11 HOURS OF STUDY |

Myers and Hansen

Chapter 16, Writing the Research Report

A. Purpose and format

B. Major sections
   1. Descriptive title
   2. Abstract
   3. Introduction
   4. Method
   5. Results
   6. Discussion
   7. References
Sample Questions

The sample questions give you an idea of the level of knowledge expected in the exam and how questions are typically phrased. They are not representative of the entire content of the exam and are not intended to serve as a practice test.

Rationales for the questions can be found on pages 17–24 of this guide. In that section, the correct answer is identified and each answer is explained. The number in parentheses at the beginning of each rationale refers to the corresponding section of the content outline. For any questions you answer incorrectly, return to that section of the content outline for further study.

1. A researcher uses the same methods as those employed in a previous experiment and then determines if the results are the same. Which concept does this situation best illustrate?
   1) correlation
   2) observation
   3) publication
   4) replication

2. In which model of hypothesis formation is the accumulation of data used to form general explanatory principles?
   1) correlational
   2) deductive
   3) inductive
   4) scientific

3. What is the primary reason for debriefing individuals following their participation in a research study?
   1) to adhere to scientific guidelines
   2) to protect the reputations of the institution and department
   3) to avoid possible legal action by participants as a result of the study
   4) to ensure that there are no harmful consequences for participants

4. A researcher proposes to conduct an experiment that exposes participants to possible physical, social, or psychological injury. What should the institutional review board require of this researcher?
   The researcher must
   1) obtain informed consent from potential participants.
   2) receive approval from the American Psychological Association.
   3) provide payment to the research participants.
   4) conduct a less risky pilot study before proceeding.

5. Which example constitutes fraud by a psychological researcher?
   The researcher fails to
   1) obtain informed consent from all prospective participants in a study.
   2) conduct a risk/benefit analysis prior to conducting an experiment.
   3) include data in the research report that are inconsistent with the hypothesis.
   4) debrief all of the participants at the end of an experiment.
6. Which research method would be most useful to study the attitudes held by adolescents about cigarette smoking?
   1) case study
   2) experimental
   3) observation
   4) survey

7. Which is an example of a person’s position preference in responding to a questionnaire?
   When uncertain, the respondent always
   1) selects answers at random.
   2) selects the last option in multiple-choice questions.
   3) chooses the answer by the manifest content.
   4) answers all questions conservatively.

8. Which sampling method selects participants in such a manner that the odds of an individual’s being selected are known?
   1) convenience
   2) nonprobability
   3) probability
   4) quota

9. What is a disadvantage of quota sampling?
   1) The procedure for selecting participants is not random.
   2) The findings are valid only when the sample is large.
   3) Only alternate participants can be selected.
   4) The procedure is valid only when the sample is large.

10. An observed correlation between two variables of interest may be the result of an unknown or unmeasured variable that is moderately associated with both measured variables. What term is used in correlational research to refer to this alternative explanation?
    1) bidirectional causation
    2) causal modeling
    3) multiple correlation
    4) third variable problem

11. What can be concluded about the cause and effect relationship between two variables that have a highly significant correlation?
    1) No conclusion can be drawn about the cause and effect relationship.
    2) The cause and effect relationship is significant if the correlation is positive.
    3) The cause and effect relationship is significant if the correlation is negative.
    4) There is a significant cause and effect relationship between the two variables.

12. What is a disadvantage of cross-sectional studies as compared to longitudinal studies?
    Cross-sectional studies
    1) require a larger number of participants.
    2) require more time for data collection.
    3) have higher participant attrition rates.
    4) do not allow for causal inferences.

13. A researcher learns that a university is about to implement a new program designed to reduce racial tension on campus. Because the researcher knows about this event before it occurs, which design would be most appropriate?
    1) case study
    2) cross-sectional
    3) observational
    4) pretest/posttest

14. A researcher collects a lengthy and detailed description of an individual’s experiences and behaviors. This situation illustrates which type of research?
    1) case study
    2) correlational study
    3) quasi-experiment
    4) true experiment
15. Which situation is an example of an archival study?
   A researcher
   1) joins a college fraternity to learn about its initiation rituals.
   2) unobtrusively observes the behavior of shoppers at a local mall.
   3) uses existing court records to investigate variables that influence plea bargaining.
   4) investigates and describes three individuals who have a rare form of mental illness.

16. Under which condition is an experimental hypothesis supported?
   1) Holding the independent variable constant brings about a change in the dependent variable.
   2) Manipulating the independent variable brings about a change in the dependent variable.
   3) Holding the dependent variable constant brings about a change in the independent variable.
   4) Manipulating the dependent variable brings about a change in the independent variable.

17. A researcher hypothesizes that there will be a significant difference in the concerns expressed by pregnant women during the first, second, or third trimester of pregnancy. What is the independent variable in this hypothesis?
   1) difference in concerns
   2) expressed concerns
   3) pregnant women
   4) trimester of pregnancy

18. What feature distinguishes a ratio scale from other scales of measurement?
   1) It allows for the use of negative numbers.
   2) It possesses a true zero point.
   3) There are equal intervals between the values.
   4) More powerful statistical tests can be used.

19. Two observers have separately scored a child’s play behaviors for aggressiveness. Which measurement concept assesses the level of agreement between the two observers?
   1) face validity
   2) criterion validity
   3) interrater reliability
   4) test-retest reliability

20. Researchers are studying whether the safety level of a person’s driving varies depending upon the type of vehicle driven. The researchers have designed a safe driving practices questionnaire. They have asked a panel of driving instructors to review their questionnaire to determine whether it measures the important aspects of driving safety. The process of soliciting feedback from the driving instructors is intended to improve which aspect of the questionnaire’s validity?
   1) content
   2) external
   3) face
   4) internal

21. Rats are randomly divided into three groups for a study on the effects of diet on maze-learning time. Through a mechanical malfunction, rats in one of the groups receive much less water with their food than the other two groups. Why is this factor a threat to internal validity?
   1) An extraneous variable has systematically affected all groups in the study.
   2) An extraneous variable has systematically affected one group, but not the other groups.
   3) The independent variable has been changed for one group, but not for the other groups.
   4) The dependent variable has been changed for one group, but not for the other groups.
22. In which research situation would the experiment be confounded?

1) The dependent variable varies systematically with the independent variable.
2) The dependent variable fails to vary systematically with the independent variable.
3) An extraneous variable varies systematically with the independent variable.
4) An extraneous variable fails to vary systematically with the independent variable.

23. A middle-school student designs a science project to determine whether female cats prefer scented or unscented kitty litter (cat-box filler). The student buys a box of unscented, brown kitty litter and a box of scented, blue kitty litter for the project. The student finds that the sample of cats used the brown, unscented kitty litter more frequently and concludes that cats prefer unscented kitty litter. Which two variables are confounded in this experiment?

1) kitty litter color and cat’s gender
2) kitty litter color and kitty litter scent
3) kitty litter scent and frequency of use
4) cat’s gender and frequency of use

24. Which is a strategy for avoiding the threat of maturation to the internal validity of a study?

1) Ensure appropriate number of subjects in the study group.
2) Ensure that all subjects are from the same cohort or age group.
3) Minimize the time between administering pretest and posttest measures.
4) Minimize the impact of treatment ordering effects.

25. What aspect of a research study can be enhanced by using measures such as aggregation, multivariate designs, nonreactive measurements, field experiments, and naturalistic observations?

1) external validity
2) operational definitions
3) reliability
4) statistical power

26. Which statement best characterizes a between-subjects experimental design?

1) Participants are sampled from two different populations.
2) Participants are asked to choose between two experimental conditions.
3) Participants are each assigned to at least two levels of the independent variable.
4) Participants are each assigned to a single experimental condition.

27. What is the rationale for randomly assigning each research participant to one of two groups?

1) to eliminate systematic bias in the groups
2) to manipulate the independent variables in the groups
3) to protect the privacy of the participants
4) to ensure representative sampling

28. A researcher wants to determine if listening to familiar music causes people to become more or less contented than they are when listening to unfamiliar music. Hoping to control for the potential effects of age, the researcher randomly assigns students of the same age to listen to either familiar music or unfamiliar music. What kind of experimental design is this researcher using?

1) mixed design
2) multiple-independent-groups design
3) two-matched-groups design
4) factorial design
29. A researcher is studying the effects of a new drug on the treatment of migraine headaches. The researcher believes that the drug will be most effective if taken at night rather than during the day. The researcher randomly assigns participants to different drug level/time-of-day treatment combinations. Which type of experimental design is the researcher using?

1) mixed design
2) two-matched-groups design
3) between-subjects factorial design
4) within-subjects factorial design

30. A researcher tests the effects of sleep deprivation on memory. Ten participants are asked to memorize a list of 20 words. They are then allowed to sleep for four hours, at which point they are awakened and asked to recall the 20 words. The next night, the subjects are allowed to sleep two hours, at which point they are awakened and asked to recall the 20 words. What design did the researcher use?

1) between-subjects one independent variable design
2) within-subjects one independent variable design
3) between-subjects multiple independent variable design
4) within-subjects multiple independent variable design

31. In within-subjects designs, what confounds may result from administering the conditions in the same order to all participants?

1) history effects
2) practice effects
3) selection effects
4) mortality effects

32. Which technique is used to control progressive error in within-subjects designs?

1) block randomization
2) counterbalancing
3) random assignment
4) statistical regression

33. The number of problem behaviors that a child displays is counted for six weeks. For the next six weeks, the number of problem behaviors is counted while the child undergoes behavior modification therapy. Next, the number of problem behaviors is counted for six weeks after the therapy is discontinued. Which type of experimental design is being used in this study?

1) ABA
2) BAB
3) ABAB
4) ABABA

34. Which statement is true of the frequency distribution illustrated below?

1) The mean will be greater than the mode.
2) The mean will be less than the mode.
3) The median will be greater than the mode.
4) The median will be less than the mean.

35. Random samples of 100 full-time and 100 part-time undergraduate students are asked to rate the usefulness of a new computer network at the college library. The full-time students rate the facilities as more useful than do the part-time students. Which conclusion illustrates the concept of statistical inference?

The full-time students
1) sampled find the facilities more useful than do the part-time students sampled.
2) at the college find the facilities more useful than do the part-time students at the college.
3) sampled have greater opportunity to use the facilities than do the part-time students sampled.
4) at the college have greater opportunity to use the facilities than do the part-time students at the college.
36. A researcher is examining the effect of caffeine on memory. Participants are placed in one of three treatment groups that differ as follows: twenty minutes prior to taking a short-term memory test, participants in Group 1 ingest 200 mg of caffeine, participants in Group 2 ingest 100 mg of caffeine, and participants in Group 3 ingest a placebo. What statistic should be used to determine whether caffeine affects short-term memory?
  1) one-way between-subjects ANOVA
  2) one-way repeated-measures ANOVA
  3) two-way between-subjects ANOVA
  4) two-way repeated-measures ANOVA

37. A researcher is evaluating a set of research findings. Why would the researcher want to replicate the findings?
   Replication will promote the
   1) interaction of the variables.
   2) reactivity of the participants.
   3) internal validity of the study.
   4) external validity of the study.

38. Psychological research reports should be written in a style similar to which document?
   1) an article in a popular magazine
   2) an editorial in a newspaper
   3) a study published in a medical journal
   4) a chapter in a textbook

39. When is the abstract for a psychological research report usually written?
   1) first, before any other part of the paper
   2) immediately after the data are collected
   3) after the title page is formulated
   4) last, after the entire paper is complete

40. A researcher is studying the relationship between social support and stress among young mothers during the transition to parenthood. Which statement should appear in the procedure subsection of the research report?
   1) “The average age of the participants was 20.3 years.”
   2) “The participants were interviewed in their homes during their third trimester of pregnancy.”
   3) “The participants were found to have higher levels of stress after becoming parents.”
   4) “Previous research suggests that social support can buffer stress for young mothers.”
SECTION FOUR

Rationales

1.(IA2)
1) Correlation refers to the degree of relationship between two variables.
2) Observation refers to the systematic noting and recording of events.
3) Publication refers to the write-up of a research paper.
4) Replication refers to the repeating of research procedures to verify that the outcome obtained is the same as in the previous research experiment.

2.(IC2)
1) Correlational is not a model of hypothesis formation. Correlation refers to the degree of relationship between two variables.
2) The deductive model of hypothesis formation is the process of reasoning from general principles to make predictions about specific cases.
3) The inductive model of hypothesis formation is the process of reasoning from specific cases to more general principles.
4) Scientific does not refer to a specific model of hypothesis formation.

3.(IIA2)
1) Although by debriefing individuals the researcher does follow APA scientific guidelines, this is not the primary reason for the debriefing.
2) Debriefing is conducted to protect the participants, not to protect the institution and the department.
3) The researcher is legally responsible for what happens to the participants in a study.
4) Debriefing participants by explaining the true nature and purpose of the study will eliminate or minimize the harmful effects of any deception used in the study.

4.(IIA3)
1) Obtaining informed consent ensures that participants are fully informed about the possible risks and benefits of participating before they decide whether to be in the study.
2) The APA publishes guidelines for conducting ethical research, but it does not review and approve individual studies.
3) Payment to participants does not ensure that they will not experience harmful effects from the research.
4) Conducting a less risky pilot study would not make a risky experiment more acceptable.

5.(IIC)
1) Failing to obtain informed consent is unethical, but it does not constitute fraud.
2) Conducting a risk/benefit analysis is an important step in ensuring that the study is ethical, but it is not related to fraud.
3) Fraud involves deliberately omitting or falsifying data so that the research results come out the way the researcher wants.
4) Debriefing is an important step in ensuring that the study is ethical, but it is not related to fraud.

*correct answer
6. (IIIA1)

1) A case study is a descriptive record of an individual's experiences/behaviors as noted by an observer. A case study would be an inappropriate method for a study about adolescents' attitudes.

2) An experimental study involves manipulating variables. It is not appropriate to manipulate variables when studying attitudes about smoking.

3) The observation method is inappropriate for this topic because it is difficult to directly observe attitudes.

4) The survey method is an appropriate way to obtain information about people's attitudes by simply asking them. In addition, surveys allow the researcher to gather data about experiences, feelings, thoughts, and motives that are hard to observe directly.

7. (IIIA2)

1) Position preference is not just selecting answers at random.

2) Position preference is a type of response style that involves always choosing the response in a certain position, such as the last option, when in doubt about the right answer.

3) Responding to the manifest content of the question, the plain meaning of the words that actually appear on the page, is another type of response style.

4) How conservatively a person answers the questions is not related to position preference.

8. (IIIA3a)

1) In convenience sampling, participants are selected based on who is most readily available. The odds of selecting any one individual are not known.

2) In nonprobability sampling, the odds of selecting any one individual are not known.

*3) In probability sampling, subjects are selected in such a way that the odds of their being in the study are known.

4) In quota sampling, participants are selected using predetermined criteria to reflect the makeup of the population. Quota sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling. The odds of selecting any one individual are not known.

9. (IIIA3b)

*1) In quota sampling, researchers select samples based on predetermined quotas that are intended to reflect the makeup of the population. Since quota sampling is not random, the sample may not be truly representative of the population. Quota sampling is low in external validity.

2) The size of the sample does not affect the validity of the findings based on the use of quota sampling.

3) Quota sampling does not involve selecting alternate participants.

4) The size of the sample does not affect the validity of the procedure when quota sampling is used.

*correct answer
10.(IIIB2c)
1) Bidirectional causation means that the variables may cause each other.
2) Causal modeling is the creation and testing of models that may suggest cause and effect relationships among variables.
3) Multiple correlation is defined as statistical intercorrelations among three or more variables.
*4) The third variable problem is an alternative explanation in correlational research. It is the term used to specify when a correlation between two variables of interest may be the result of an unknown or unmeasured variable that is associated with both measured variables.

11.(IIIB2a)
*1) A correlation between two variables does not imply that one variable causes the other variable.
2) Even if a positive relationship exists between two variables, correlation does not prove causation.
3) Even if a negative relationship exists between two variables, correlation does not prove causation.
4) Even if a significant relationship exists between two variables, correlation does not imply that they are causally related.

12.(IIIC2b/c)
*1) Because cross-sectional studies involve comparing more groups than longitudinal studies, they require more subjects.
2) Longitudinal designs require more time because participants are followed over a long period of time to see how they change.
3) There is a higher attrition rate in longitudinal designs because participants are followed over a long period of time and some may drop out along the way.
4) Neither cross-sectional nor longitudinal studies permit causal inferences to be drawn.

13.(IIIC2d)
1) A case study is a descriptive record of an individual, not a group. It would not be an appropriate design for this situation.
2) A cross-sectional design compares participants who are at different stages of development. It would not be an appropriate design for this situation.
3) The observational method is one way to collect data, but it does not take advantage of the fact that the researcher is forewarned about the event.
*4) A pretest/posttest design allows the researcher to take measures before and after the program is implemented to see if the program had any effect on racial tension.

14.(IIID2)
*1) A case study involves an in-depth investigation of an individual's experience and behaviors by a researcher. It does not involve groups of subjects or manipulation of conditions, as do 2), 3), and 4).
2) A correlational study examines the degree of relationship between two traits, behaviors, or events.
3) A quasi-experimental design is used to assess the effects of different experimental manipulations, but without the use of random assignment of subjects to the conditions.
4) An experimental design is used to assess the effects of different experimental manipulations, with the use of random assignment of subjects to the conditions.

15.(IIID3)
1) This is an example of a participant-observer study in which the researcher actually becomes part of the group being studied.
2) This is an example of naturalistic observation in which behaviors are observed as they occur spontaneously in natural settings.
*3) This is an example of an archival study in which the researcher examines data that has already been collected for other purposes.
4) This is an example of a case study in which an individual is described in great detail.

*correct answer
16.(IVA1)
1) The independent variable is manipulated by the experimenter. It is not held constant.
2) If manipulating the independent variable brings about a change in the dependent variable, then the experimental hypothesis is supported.
3) The dependent variable is measured by the experimenter. It is not held constant.
4) The dependent variable is measured and the independent variable is manipulated.

17.(IVA1)
1) The difference in concerns refers to changes in the dependent variable, expressed concerns.
2) Expressed concerns is the dependent variable.
3) The pregnant women are the participants.
4) The researcher is examining whether the trimester of pregnancy affects expressed concerns; therefore, trimester of pregnancy is the independent variable.

18.(IVA3d)
1) Other scales of measurement may also include negative numbers.
2) Only a ratio scale has a true zero point.
3) Both ratio and interval scales have equal intervals between the values.
4) The same statistical tests can be used for both interval and ratio scales of measurement.

19.(IVA4b)
1) The level of agreement between observers is an issue of reliability, not validity.
2) See 1).
3) Interrater reliability refers to the degree of agreement between different observers or raters.
4) Test-retest reliability refers to the consistency between an individual’s scores on the same test taken at two or more different times.

20.(IVA5b)
*1) Content validity refers to whether the content of a measure (such as a questionnaire) reflects the content of what is being measured (such as driving safety). This type of validity is often determined with the help of subject matter experts who judge the measure.
2) External validity refers to how well the findings of an experiment generalize to people and settings that were not tested directly.
3) Face validity refers to the degree to which a manipulation or measurement technique is self-evident.
4) Internal validity refers to the determination that the changes in behavior observed across treatment conditions in the experiment were actually caused by the independent variable.

21.(IVB2)
1) The mechanical malfunction is an extraneous variable, but it has not affected all the groups.
2) An extraneous variable is any factor that is not the main focus of the experiment and is not intentionally manipulated. The mechanical malfunction is an extraneous variable, and since it has affected only one of the groups, it is a threat to internal validity.
3) This question describes the effect of an extraneous variable on one of the groups; it does not discuss the independent variable.
4) The question describes the effect of an extraneous variable on one of the groups; it does not discuss the dependent variable.

*correct answer
22.(IVB2)
1) If the dependent variable varies as a result of changes in the independent variable, this is an indication that the experiment has worked, not that it is confounded.
2) If the dependent variable fails to vary as a result of changes in the independent variable, this is an indication that the experiment has not worked, not that it is confounded.
3) If an extraneous variable varies systematically with the independent variable, the study is confounded because it is not clear which variable is responsible for any changes in the dependent variable.
4) If an extraneous variable fails to vary systematically with the independent variable, this means that the study is not confounded.

23.(IVB2)
1) Confounding occurs when an extraneous variable varies systematically with the independent variable. Kitty litter color is an extraneous variable, but cat’s gender does not vary in the study.
2) Kitty litter color and kitty litter scent are confounded. Color and scent vary systematically with one another, so it is impossible to tell whether color or scent is responsible for the cat’s preference for one kitty litter over the other.
3) Confounding occurs when an extraneous variable varies systematically with the independent variable. Although scent is an independent variable, frequency of use is a dependent variable.
4) Confounding occurs when an extraneous variable varies systematically with the independent variable. Frequency of use is a dependent variable and cat’s gender does not vary in the study.

24.(IVB3c)
1) Ensuring an appropriate number of subjects in the study group has no effect on maturation.
2) Assuring that all subjects are from the same age group has no effect on maturation.
3) Maturation refers to any internal changes in participants that might affect the dependent variable. Minimizing the duration of the experiment (the time between administering pretest and posttest measures) will minimize the amount of change that could occur.
4) Treatment ordering effects are not relevant to maturation.

25.(IVC3d)
1) External validity refers to the degree to which we can generalize the results of a study to other people and settings. The use of aggregation, multivariate designs, nonreactive measurements, field experiments, and naturalistic observations can enhance a study’s external validity.
2) The measures listed in the question do not affect the operational definitions of the variables.
3) The measures listed in the question do not affect the reliability of the measures.
4) The measures listed in the question do not affect the statistical power.

26.(VA)
1) A between-subjects design can be used regardless of the populations that are included in the study.
2) Participants are placed into experimental conditions by the researcher. Participants normally do not choose which condition they will be in.
3) If participants are each assigned to at least two levels of the independent variable, it is a repeated-measures design.
4) If each participant is randomly assigned to one level of the independent variable, it is a between-subjects design.

*correct answer
27. (VA1a)

1) Using random assignment eliminates any systematic bias that might cause the groups to differ at the beginning of the study.
2) Random assignment is not necessary for manipulating independent variables.
3) Random assignment does not protect the privacy of participants.
4) Random assignment involves assigning participants to experimental conditions, not sampling participants from the population.

28. (VA1b)

1) In a mixed design, within-subjects and between-subjects variables are combined in a single experiment. In this question, there is only a between-subjects variable.
2) In a multiple-independent-group design, subjects are randomly assigned to more than two conditions. In this question, only two conditions are present.
3) In a two-matched-groups design, the groups are matched on a variable (such as age) that is believed to be highly related to the dependent variable.
4) In a factorial design, two or more independent variables are studied simultaneously. In this question, there is only one independent variable, familiarity of music.

29. (VA2a)

1) In a mixed design, within-subjects and between-subjects variables are combined in a single experiment. In this question, there are two between-subject variables.
2) In a two-matched-groups design, the groups are matched on a variable that is believed to be highly related to the dependent variable. In this question, there is no matching variable in the study.

30. (VB1b)

1) This is not a between-subjects design because each participant experiences more than one experimental condition.
2) This is a within-subjects one independent variable design because each participant experiences more than one condition, and sleep deprivation is the only independent variable.
3) See 1).
4) This is not a multiple independent variable design because there is only one independent variable, sleep deprivation.

31. (VB2b)

1) History effects occur when events outside the experiment may have caused changes in the dependent variable.
2) If the conditions are presented in the same order to all participants, participants may have a higher score in the later conditions because they have had a chance to practice, not because of the change in the independent variable.
3) Selection effects occur when there are preexisting differences between the participants in different conditions that may be responsible for their different responses to the independent variable.
4) Mortality effects occur when more participants drop out of one condition than another.
32.(VB3)
1) Block randomization is a technique that involves random assignment of subjects to conditions, but ensures that equal numbers of subjects are in all conditions. It does not control for progressive error.

*2) Counterbalancing is a technique for controlling order effects by distributing progressive error across the different treatment conditions of the experiment.

3) Random assignment is a technique for assigning subjects to treatment conditions so that each subject has an equal chance of being assigned to each treatment condition. It does not control for errors that occur as the experiment progresses.

4) Statistical regression is a naturally occurring phenomenon in which extreme scores tend to regress toward the mean during retesting. It is a source of error, not a technique for controlling error.

33.(VC1)
*1) ABA is the design being used. A represents a phase of the experiment in which measures are taken while no treatment is being administered. (The number of problem behaviors is counted.) B represents a phase where measures are taken while treatment is being administered.(The number of problem behaviors is counted while the child undergoes therapy.) Then A is repeated.

2) BAB is not correct. See 1).

3) ABAB is not correct. See 1).

4) ABABA is not correct. See 1).

34.(VI A2)
1) See 2).

*2) Of the three measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode), the mean is the most sensitive to, and drawn toward, extreme scores such as those occurring in the lower tail of the distribution in the illustration. The median is affected to a lesser degree than the mean. The mode is not affected at all. Therefore, in a negatively skewed distribution such as the one illustrated, the mean would be the lowest value, the median would be the next lowest, and the mode would be the highest.

3) See 2).

4) See 2).

35.(VI B)
1) Although it is true that the full-time students sampled found the facilities more useful than the part-time students sampled, this statement does not involve any statistical inference.

*2) Statistical inference refers to making a statement about the population and all its samples based on what we see in the samples we have. Based on the samples of part-time and full-time students in this study, inferences are being made about how all part-time and full-time students at the college feel about the facilities.

3) It may be true that the full-time students sampled have more opportunity to use the facilities than the part-time students sampled, but the study did not measure this factor.

4) It may be true that the full-time students at the college have more opportunity to use the facilities than the part-time students at the college, but the study did not measure this factor.
36. (VIB4a)

1) This is a one-way design because only one independent variable (amount of caffeine) is involved. It is a between-subjects design because each participant experiences only one experimental condition.

2) This is not a repeated-measures design because each participant experiences only one experimental condition.

3) This is not a two-way design because only one independent variable (amount of caffeine) is involved, not two.

4) This is not a two-way design because only one independent variable (amount of caffeine) is involved, not two. It is not a repeated-measures design because each participant experiences only one experimental condition.

37. (VIC2)

1) Replication does not affect how the variables interact with one another in the study.

2) Replication does not affect how the participants will react during the study.

3) Replication does not affect internal validity (the degree to which a researcher is able to state a causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables).

4) Replication, or repetition of the experiment with other populations or in other settings, allows the researcher to determine how generalizable (or externally valid) the research findings are.

39. (VIIB2)

1) Because the abstract is a summary of the report, it would be very difficult to write it before any of the other sections have been written.

2) Because the abstract includes a description and interpretation of the results, it could not be written before the data have been analyzed.

3) Although the abstract appears on the page following the title page, it is usually written after the report is completed.

4) The abstract is a summary of the research report and should be written last, after the entire report has been written.

40. (VIIB4)

1) Characteristics of the sample are described in the participants subsection.

2) A description of everything that happened to the participants in the experiment in chronological order is included in the procedure subsection.

3) Statements of findings are included in the results section.

4) A review of the literature is included in the introduction.

38. (VIIBA)

1) An article in a popular magazine is not written in a scientific writing style.

2) An editorial in a newspaper is not written in a scientific writing style.

3) A research report is written in a scientific style, as is a study published in a medical journal.

4) An essay in a textbook is not written in a scientific writing style.

*correct answer
SECTION FIVE

Taking the Exam

Registering for Your Exam

Register Online

www.excelsior.edu/examregistration
Follow the instructions and pay by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover Card.

Examination Administration

Pearson Testing Centers serve as the administrator for all Excelsior College computer-delivered exams. The Disability Services office at Excelsior College is responsible for considering requests for reasonable accommodations (exceptions for individual students with documented disabilities). If you are requesting an accommodation due to a disability, download and complete a Request for Accommodation form that can be accessed by visiting the Excelsior College website at www.excelsior.edu/disability-services.

Computer-Delivered Testing

You will take the exam by computer, entering your answers using either the keyboard or the mouse. The system is designed to be as user-friendly as possible, even for those with little or no computer experience. On-screen instructions are similar to those you would see in a paper examination booklet.

We strongly encourage you to use the online tutorial before taking your exam at a Pearson Testing Center. To access the tutorial, go to www.pearsonvue.com/uexcel and click on the Pearson VUE Tutorial link on the right hand side of the page.

On the Day of Your Exam

Important Reminders

On the day of your exam, remember to:

• dress comfortably: the computer will not mind that you’re wearing your favorite relaxation outfit

• arrive at the test site rested and prepared to concentrate for an extended period

• allow sufficient time to travel, park, and locate the test center

• be prepared for possible variations in temperature at the test center due to weather changes or energy conservation measures

• bring your ID, but otherwise, don’t weigh yourself down with belongings that will have to be kept in a locker during the test.

Academic Honesty

Nondisclosure Statement

• All test takers must agree to the terms of the Excelsior College Academic Honesty Policy before taking an examination. The agreement will be presented on screen at the Pearson VUE Testing Center before the start of your exam.

• Once the test taker agrees to the terms of the Academic Honesty Nondisclosure Statement, the exam will begin.

If you choose not to accept the terms of the agreement

• your exam will be terminated

• you will be required to leave the testing center
• you will not be eligible for a refund. For more information, review the Student Policy Handbook at www.excelsior.edu/studentpolicyhandbook.

Student behavior is monitored during and after the exam. Electronic measures are used to monitor the security of test items and scan for illegal use of intellectual property. This monitoring includes surveillance of Internet chat rooms, websites, and other public forums.

Information About UExcel Exams for Colleges and Universities

A committee of teaching faculty and practicing professionals determines the learning outcomes to be tested on each exam. Excelsior College Center for Educational Measurement staff oversee the technical aspects of test construction in accordance with current professional standards. To promote fairness in testing, we take special care to ensure that the language used in the exams and related materials is consistent, professional, and user friendly. Editorial staff perform systematic quantitative and qualitative reviews to ensure accuracy, clarity, and compliance with conventions of bias-free language usage.

Excelsior College, the test developer, recommends granting three (3) semester hours of upper-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination. The examination satisfies the research requirement in the sociology concentration of the Excelsior College baccalaureate degrees in Liberal Arts. Excelsior College baccalaureate-level nursing students should consult their advisors regarding duplication of credit with the Research in Nursing exam. Other colleges and universities also recognize this exam as a basis for granting credit or advanced standing. Individual institutions set their own policies for the amount of credit awarded and the minimum acceptable grade.

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