

# Correlational vs. Experimental Studies

For each of the following decide whether it is a correlational study or an experiment. If it is a correlational study decide what type of correlation was observed. If it is an experiment identify the independent variable manipulated by the researcher.

Remember:

- Correlational research looks for some relation between 2 or more sets of data. Even if such a relationship is found, no cause-effect conclusions can be drawn.
  - Positive correlation: the relationship is such that high scores in one data set tend to be associated with high scores in another data set (and low scores tend to be associated with low scores)
  - Negative correlation: the relationship is inverse; that is, high scores in one data set tend to be associated with low scores in the other data set, and visa versa.
  - Experiment: under carefully controlled conditions researcher compares the responses of participants exposed to an intentionally manipulated independent variable to the responses of participants not exposed to that independent variable.
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1. After administering a test of self-esteem to all the 6th graders in a school, the school psychologist has 6th grade teachers monitor the number of times each 6th grader voluntarily participates in class (answering questions, offering opinions) and determined the lower the self-esteem score of the child, the less they participated.

Type of study \_\_\_\_\_

Type of correlation OR Independent variable \_\_\_\_\_

2. A survey study conducted in England found that wealthy women between the ages of 30 and 50 reported more frequent sex, more orgasms, and more enjoyment of sex than women of the same age from poorer households.

Type of study \_\_\_\_\_

Type of correlation OR Independent variable \_\_\_\_\_

3. A cognitive psychologist tests students' ability to recall of textbook material studied for thirty minutes under either noisy or quiet conditions.

Type of study \_\_\_\_\_

Type of correlation OR Independent variable \_\_\_\_\_

4. Using photographs, a social psychologist had participants rate the attractiveness as well as the perceived competence of 50 individuals. Those individuals rated as the most attractive were also rated as the most competent.

Type of study \_\_\_\_\_

Type of correlation OR Independent variable \_\_\_\_\_

5. After observing and treating hundreds of patients, Dr. Bashir has come to the conclusion that the larger the ridges on a Klingon's forehead, the lower their self-control when provoked.

Type of study \_\_\_\_\_

Type of correlation OR Independent variable \_\_\_\_\_