

**Basic Methods of Research**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
<b><i>Naturalistic Observation/Field Study</i></b>		
Behavior that is observed in the environment in which it naturally occurs.	Provides a great deal of firsthand behavioral information. The participant's behavior is more spontaneous, natural, and varied than behaviors taking place in a laboratory. May provide a wealth of hypotheses.	Observer's presence may alter the participant's behavior; the observer's recording of the behavior may be biased; often not clear the extent to which generalizations can be made to other settings and participants.
<b><i>Case Studies</i></b>		
Behavior of one person or a few people that is studied in great detail and depth.	Provides a great amount of detailed descriptive information. Very useful for forming hypotheses.	The case (s) studied may not be representative of the population. May be time consuming and costly. Potential for observer bias.
<b><i>Surveys</i></b>		
Asking a large sample of participants a standard set of questions.	Enables an immense amount of data to be collected quickly and inexpensively.	Sampling bias may skew results. Poorly worded questions may lead to responses that are ambiguous so that data results are unclear. Accuracy contingent on willingness of respondents to answer truthfully and completely.
<b><i>Correlational Research</i></b>		
Use of statistical methods to examine the relationship between two or more variables.	May clarify relationships between variables that cannot be examined by other means. Allows one to predict future behavior.	Does not enable one to reach cause-and-effect conclusions.
<b><i>Experimental Research</i></b>		
The systematic manipulation of one or more variables is done in order to study the effect on other variables.	Control of variables enables one to draw cause-and-effect conclusions.	Laboratory-based research is artificial by nature; results may not be generalizable; difficult to control all variables.