AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

APA Databases Methodology Field Values

Value	Definition
Brain Imaging	The use of imaging tools such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging, Computed Tomography, Positron Emission Tomography, or Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging to study brain anatomy and its involvement in neurological and cognitive functions.
Clinical Case Study	Case reports that include disorder, diagnosis, and clinical treatment for individuals with mental or medical illnesses.
Clinical Trial	Work consisting of a clinical trial that involves at least one test treatment and one control treatment to study the safety and/or efficacy of new diagnostic, therapeutic, or pharmacology protocols. Participants are assigned by chance to separate groups that compare different treatment; neither the researchers nor the participants can choose which group. Used for human populations only.
Empirical Study	Study based on facts, systematic observation, or experiment, rather than theory or general philosophical principle.
Experimental Replication	Replication of the methods or results of a previous study, as indicated by the author. Studies that include extensions to original research are not considered replications.
Follow-up Study	Empirical study which re-examines studies of individuals or groups, comparing the present findings with the original observations or measurements in a previously conducted study.
Longitudinal Study	A study that follows the same individuals or groups of subjects over an extended period of time.
Prospective Study	Study that analyzes forward over time a condition or characteristic shared by members of a group or cohort.
Retrospective Study	Research that examines past experiences or events to study causative factors related to disease or behavior when the outcome is already known.
Field Study	Research undertaken outside the laboratory or place of learning ("in the field"), usually in a natural environment using naturalistic observation techniques.
Interview	A goal-directed conversation with the objective of obtaining information from an individual.
Focus Group	Qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their opinions, perceptions, or experiences on issues, products, or services.

Value	Definition
Literature Review	Survey of previously published literature on a particular topic to define and clarify a particular problem; summarize previous investigations; identify relations, contradictions, gaps, and inconsistencies in the literature; and suggest the next step in solving the problem.
Systematic Review	A form of literature review that comprehensively identifies, appraises, and synthesizes all relevant research on a specifically formulated question.
Mathematical Model	A mathematical structure, formula, or equation that can be used to describe and study a real situation. This type of methodology is commonly found in, but not limited to, studies of epidemiology, neural networks, artificial intelligence, robotics, human factors, utility theory, and statistics.
Meta Analysis	Statistical analysis of previously published empirical data.
Metasynthesis	Interpretive integration of primary qualitative research.
Non-clinical Case Study	Document consisting of non-clinical or organizational case examples of the concepts being researched or studied. The setting is always non-clinical and does not include treatment-related environments.
Qualitative Study	A type of research methodology that produces descriptive data, with little emphasis given to numerical quantitative measures.
Quantitative Study	Study that provides numerical representation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomenon studied followed by the application of various descriptive and inferential statistical methods.
Scientific Simulation	Research technique that reproduces events and/or processes for the purpose of testing or experimentation in any discipline. Use only when the document clearly states that it is a Scientific Simulation.
Treatment Outcome	Empirical evaluations undertaken to assess the results or consequences of treatment and procedures used in combating disease in order to determine the efficacy, effectiveness, safety, and practicability of these interventions.
Twin Study	Compares the etiology of genetic and environmental traits of identical and fraternal twins.

Find additional search tips and tools from APA training experts at **www.apa.org/pubs/databases/training**

Contact APA's Customer Engagement team for training and search help at psycinfo@apa.org.

Updated August 2020