

Summary

4.1 Research Methods

Subject	Year	Start date	Duration
Psychology	IB1	Week 1, January	2 weeks 8 hours

Course Part

Cognitive Approach: Research Methods

Description

Essentially, there are two broad categories of research—experimental and non-experimental—that use qualitative and quantitative approaches. There is no hierarchy to the approaches. The method chosen will depend on the aims and objectives of an investigation. No method is perfect and all methods have their individual strengths and limitations. A researcher will choose the method or methods that are most suitable for a specific research study.

In this unit students will develop a full understanding of two research methods and review their use based on the research they have covered in the Cognitive Approach. We will also assess strengths and limitations of each method.

Inquiry & Purpose

Inquiry / Higher Order Questions

Type	Inquiry Questions
Content-based	Evaluate the use of Research Methods used in the study of human cognition.

Curriculum

Syllabus Content

Core

Approaches to researching behaviour

Qualitative

Qualitative research: Qualitative research is exploratory and used to gain an insight into psychological phenomena of interest. Further research into the topic may well include quantitative studies with more data.

Case studies: A case study is a detailed analysis over time of an area of interest (a case) to produce context-dependent knowledge. A case study could also be an in-depth study of an individual.

Quantitative

Experiments: Experiments are designed with one clear Independent Variable and a Dependent Variable. All other factors that could affect the Dependent Variable are controlled as far as possible. The Independent Variable may be graduated, resulting in a range of conditions on a scale. Alternatively there may be only two conditions for the

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Independent Variable: one is the control, the other the test condition. This is a simple experiment.

Field experiments: The researcher manipulates the Independent Variable but conducts the experiment in a real-life environment. As a result extraneous variables cannot be controlled.

Quasi-experiments: In the above experiments participants are randomly assigned to a condition on the Independent Variable. In quasi-experiments participants are grouped based on a characteristic of interest, such as gender, ethnicity, or scores on a depression scale.

Natural experiments: In a natural experiment researchers find naturally occurring variables and study them.

 **ATL Skills**

 **Approaches to Learning**

 **Thinking**

- In this unit, we will

set students a task which required higher-order thinking skills (such as analysis or evaluation)

 **Developing IB Learners**

 **Learner Profile**

 **Knowledgeable**