

Welcome!

Week 4: Surveys, Experiments, Midterms and More

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PS 210: Introduction to Empirical Methods

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Plan for Today

- Quick Crash Course on Survey Questions and Experiments
- Midterm Review and Questions

Writing a Good Survey Question

- Surveys are often built to compare groups, describe something or analyze something
- Should contain who, what, when, where, why or how components

Writing a Good Survey Question

- Put yourself in the position of the respondent
- How people respond to surveys
 - Stage 0: Encode Information
 - Stage 1: Understand all the words and what the question is asking
 - Stage 2: Recall all information and figure out how to answer the question
 - Stage 3: Assess initial answer for accuracy and completeness
 - Stage 4: Report answer by mapping your answer to the options given

Writing a Good Survey Question

- When writing questions, think about
 - Who is answering your questions? Just because you understand the question does not mean the respondent does
 - The difficulty of the question
 - How the respondents view the issues that you are talking about

Writing a Good Survey Question

- Things to Keep in Mind
 - Ask about ONE thing per question
 - Use simple words
 - Avoid assumptions
 - Make sure wording is clear

Experiments

The **fundamental problem of causal inference** is that we can't compare a world with the cause to a world without the cause.

TO FIX THIS: We can take **Random Samples** of the population so that we get two comparable groups

Experiments

In order for random samples to work...

1. It should be LARGE
2. Cases should be selected independently
3. Each member of the population should have an equal chance of being selected

Types of xperiments

- Lab Experiments
- Field Experiments
- Natural Experiments
- Survey Experiments

Validity

Internal Validity: Does the treatment cause the dependent variable in this study?

External Validity: Does the causal claim generalize across persons, settings, treatments variables and measurement variables

Tips to Study for Tests in College

- Know core concepts
- Create YOUR OWN examples for each concept
- Teach it to yourself in the mirror

What to Expect for the Midterm

- Application based exam
- Open ended questions with long and short answers
- Get ready to provide your own examples or explain how provided examples apply to course concepts

Questions?

No Section Next Week!

Good Luck on the Midterm!