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## **UNIT I**

### **AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

#### **DEFNITION**

Social psychology is the scientific study of how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, and implied presence of others. In this definition, scientific refers to empirical investigation using the scientific method, while the terms thoughts, feelings, and behaviors refer to the psychological variables that can be measured in humans. Imagined and implied presences refer to the internalized social norms that humans are influenced by even when alone.

Social psychologists typically explain human behavior as a result of the relationship between mental state and social situation, studying the conditions under which thoughts, feelings, and behaviors occur and how these variables influence social interactions.

Social psychology has bridged the gap between psychology and sociology to an extent, but a divide still exists between the two fields. Nevertheless, sociological approaches to psychology remain an important counterpart to conventional psychological research. In addition to the split between psychology and sociology, there is difference in emphasis between American and European social psychologists, as the former traditionally have focused more on the individual, whereas the latter have generally paid more attention to group-level phenomena.

## **BOUNDARIES OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

The Boundaries of Social Psychology 2 Mountain Quest Institute Broadly, the content of this text deals with:

- (1) the self, understanding others and interpersonal communications;
- (2) the nature of attitudes, persuasion and attitude change;
- (3) social influence and personal control;
- (4) affiliation, attraction, love, aggression and violence; and
- (5) prosocial behavior, behavior in and between groups, and social behavior in the physical environment.

In the text *Social Psychology*, Myers defines social psychology as “the scientific study of how people think about, influence and relate to one another.” (Myers, 1987) He goes on to say that social psychology, a subfield of its parent disciplines, sociology and psychology, shares common interests with sociology (studying how people behave in groups), and personality psychology (focusing on the individual person). Myers organizes his text around his definition, dividing the field into social thinking (behavior and attitudes, social beliefs); social influence (cultural and group influences, conformity, persuasion); and social relations (aggression, altruism, prejudice, attraction). In the text *Social Psychology* (8th Ed.), Baron and Byrne define social psychology as “the scientific field that seeks to understand the nature and causes of individual behavior and thought in social situations.” (Baron and Byrne, 1997) The authors attempt to

- (1) integrate emergent thinking in social behavior and social thoughts;
- (2) integrate major principles which seem to cut across many different areas of the field (attribution and its role in persuasion, prejudice, long-term relationships, social influence, and conflict); and
- (3) integrate (or link) all the topics covered in the text.

The model of social psychology proposed by Gold and Douvan in *A New Outline of Social Psychology* places the individual in the middle of their social environment, which is comprised of culture, social organization and interpersonal relations. The focus area of social psychology is the boundaries. “The mission of

social psychology is to explain how influence is exerted across these boundaries, that is, to state the conditions at the boundaries under which change occurs in one or the other.” (Gold and Douvan, 1997, p. 49) Although the boundaries between the three environmental factors are of interest insofar as they comprise indirect paths of influence between the social and the psychological, the boundaries between the individual and the three social environments are the “zones of interpenetration.” Focusing on these boundaries of interaction touches on both psychology and sociology, but also encompasses new areas that have historically not been considered as either in the domain of psychology or sociology. The structural components of the Gold and Douvan model include motives, resources, social organization and social roles, interpersonal relations and identities, and culture and benefits (Gold and Douvan, 1997, p. 17). The collection of material published in *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (Fourth Ed.) includes recent papers by recognized experts in the field of Social psychology. The two-volume collection organizes around the broad areas of historical, methodological, interdisciplinary and emerging perspectives, and intrapersonal, personal, interpersonal and collective phenomena. The following areas of concern are grouped under these broad headings. Historical Perspectives: Major developments, the social being Methodological Perspectives: Experimentation, survey methods, measurement, data analysis Intrapersonal Phenomena: Attitudes, persuasion, mental representation and memory, control and automaticity, decision making and judgment, motivation, emotions Personal Phenomena: Personality, the self, development in childhood and adulthood, gender

olitical and economic institutions, with cultural values, and with historical sequencing” (Converse, 1986, p. 58). Some of these incredibly diverse areas of social psychology have been touched on in this overview paper, with the unifying theme always the focus on the boundaries between these structures/institutions and the individual, and the relationships and interactions of people across these boundaries. Over the past two years in my work as Chief Knowledge Officer for the Department of the Navy, I have become intrigued with the importance of social capital and, using the Gold & Douvan model discussed earlier, have developed key thoughts to communicate the importance of this domain. I would like to share those thoughts here. The field of social psychology is growing rapidly and is having an increasingly important influence on how we think about human

behavior. Newspapers, magazines, websites, and other media frequently report the findings of social psychologists, and the results of social psychological research are influencing decisions in a wide variety of areas. Let's begin with a short history of the field of social psychology and then turn to a review of the basic principles of the science of social psychology.

## **THE HISTORY OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

The science of social psychology began when scientists first started to systematically and formally measure the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of human beings (Kruglanski & Stroebe, 2011). The earliest social psychology experiments on group behavior were conducted before 1900 (Triplet, 1898), and the first social psychology textbooks were published in 1908 (McDougall, 1908/2003; Ross, 1908/1974). During the 1940s and 1950s, the social psychologists Kurt Lewin and Leon Festinger refined the experimental approach to studying behavior, creating social psychology as a rigorous scientific discipline. Lewin is sometimes known as “the father of social psychology” because he initially developed many of the important ideas of the discipline, including a focus on the dynamic interactions among people. In 1954, Festinger edited an influential book called *Research Methods in the Behavioral Sciences*, in which he and other social psychologists stressed the need to measure variables and to use laboratory experiments to systematically test research hypotheses about social behavior. He also noted that it might be necessary in these experiments to deceive the participants about the true nature of the research.

Social psychology was energized by researchers who attempted to understand how the German dictator Adolf Hitler could have produced such extreme obedience and horrendous behaviors in his followers during the World War II. The studies on conformity conducted by Muzafir Sherif (1936) and Solomon Asch (1952), as well as those on obedience by Stanley Milgram (1974), showed the importance of conformity pressures in social groups and how people in authority could create obedience, even to the extent of leading people to cause severe harm to others. Philip Zimbardo, in his well-known “prison study” (Haney, Banks, & Zimbardo, 1973), found that the interactions of male college students

who were recruited to play the roles of guards and prisoners in a simulated prison became so violent that the study had to be terminated early.

Social psychology quickly expanded to study other topics. John Darley and Bibb Latané (1968) developed a model that helped explain when people do and do not help others in need, and Leonard Berkowitz (1974) pioneered the study of human aggression. Meanwhile, other social psychologists, including Irving Janis (1972), focused on group behavior, studying why intelligent people sometimes made decisions that led to disastrous results when they worked together. Still other social psychologists, including Gordon Allport and Muzafir Sherif, focused on intergroup relations, with the goal of understanding and potentially reducing the occurrence of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. Social psychologists gave their opinions in the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education U.S. Supreme Court* case that helped end racial segregation in American public schools, and social psychologists still frequently serve as expert witnesses on these and other topics (Fiske, Bersoff, Borgida, Deaux, & Heilman, 1991). In recent years insights from social psychology have even been used to design anti-violence programs in societies that have experienced genocide (Staub, Pearlman, & Bilali, 2010).

The latter part of the 20th century saw an expansion of social psychology into the field of attitudes, with a particular emphasis on cognitive processes. During this time, social psychologists developed the first formal models of persuasion, with the goal of understanding how advertisers and other people could present their messages to make them most effective (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1963). These approaches to attitudes focused on the cognitive processes that people use when evaluating messages and on the relationship between attitudes and behavior. Leon Festinger's important cognitive dissonance theory was developed during this time and became a model for later research (Festinger, 1957).

## **ROOTS OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

In the 1970s and 1980s, social psychology became even more cognitive in orientation as social psychologists used advances in cognitive psychology, which were themselves based largely on advances in computer technology, to inform the

field (Fiske & Taylor, 2008). The focus of these researchers, including Alice Eagly, Susan Fiske, E. Tory Higgins, Richard Nisbett, Lee Ross, Shelley Taylor, and many others, was on social cognition—an understanding of how our knowledge about our social worlds develops through experience and the influence of these knowledge structures on memory, information processing, attitudes, and judgment. Furthermore, the extent to which humans' decision making could be flawed due to both cognitive and motivational processes was documented (Kahneman, Slovic, & Tversky, 1982).

In the 21st century, the field of social psychology has been expanding into still other areas. Examples that we consider in this book include an interest in how social situations influence our health and happiness, the important roles of evolutionary experiences and cultures on our behavior, and the field of social neuroscience—the study of how our social behavior both influences and is influenced by the activities of our brain (Lieberman, 2010). Social psychologists continue to seek new ways to measure and understand social behavior, and the field continues to evolve. We cannot predict where social psychology will be directed in the future, but we have no doubt that it will still be alive and vibrant.

It could be argued that research on social influence reached its high water mark in the 25 or so years following Asch's (1951) seminal work on conformity. Certainly there was more work done in the core areas of social influence, like conformity, compliance, and obedience, in this period than in any other. The same can be said about research in many of the other areas covered in this volume (e.g., social facilitation, social inhibition [e.g., bystander effect], deindividuation).

However, by the mid-1980s, interest in social influence had waned, corresponding with an increase in interest in social cognition over the same period, the leading edge of which was marked by work on attribution and person perception. This shift in interest can be seen in the marked decline in the use of behavioral measures, a hallmark of work in social influence, in the decade from 1976 to 1986 in research reported in the premier journal in personality/social psychology, the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (Baumeister, Vohs, & Funder, 2007).

## **FUTURE OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

With the notable exceptions of the work of Moscovici on minority influence (reviewed by Butera et al., this volume), and Tajfel and Turner on social identity (reviewed by Gaffney & Hogg, this volume), social influence has not played a major role in social psychology since the mid-1980s. However, we believe that the chapters in this volume, along with other developments, set the stage for a return of social influence to the preeminent position it once held in social psychology.

The chapters contribute to this renaissance of interest in social influence in a number of ways. Some chapters show that it is time to take another look at classic areas in social influence. For example, as Burger points out in his chapter on obedience, few, if any, lines of research have had the shelf-life of Milgram's program of research, but despite its importance in the field, work in this area has not really advanced much beyond the original research. Burger describes a number of directions that work in this area can now take. For example, although direct (p. 434) replications of Milgram's paradigm are no longer possible, Burger (2009) has described a variant of the basic procedure that can be used in the original paradigm. He also notes that there are many settings in which people in authority give orders (e.g., supervisors, parents, elected officials), and examining the factors that determine whether people follow instructions from these sources would be of great interest. Also, instead of limiting our attention to the destructive effects of obedience, Burger suggests that studying situations in which obeying commands is beneficial (e.g., following instructions from medical professionals) would have practical as well as theoretical benefits.

We should also note that the behavior of obedience and the assumption that the source of the command is an authority have been inextricably linked since Milgram's seminal program of research. However, must they be so tightly linked? By defining obedience as something done in response to an authority, we necessarily preclude the question of when and whether people obey sources of similar or lower power status levels. It is not inconceivable to face a demand from an underling; however, this question currently is illogical to ask or examine if we insist that obedience can only be studied with the source as an authority figure. We encourage future obedience researchers to untether themselves from authority and,

instead, use source power and status as independent variables worthy of investigation on their own.

Spears's chapter on deindividuation suggests that another look at this classic area of research is also warranted. He argues that the theory's central premise that "people lose their sense of self in the crowd and become more prone to mindless aggression, has not stood up well to closer empirical or theoretical scrutiny." However, he goes on to note that the tenets of the theory have not been tested under optimal conditions, and that advances in techniques for measuring unconscious states and processes made since the time of the original research now provide the opportunity for more definitive tests.

Other chapters contribute to renewed interest in social influence by showing how integration/elaboration that advances our understanding of social influence processes is now possible. For example, in another chapter on a social influence classic, conformity, Hodges proposes that our understanding of conformity would benefit from incorporating work from anthropology and developmental and cognitive psychology, as well as from considering forces that produce divergence as well as conformity. That is, instead of looking at conformity in isolation, this phenomenon should be considered within a broader context of social influence processes. Hornsey and Jetten's chapter on stability and change within groups not only represents a step in just this direction, but also an extension in that they suggest exactly how change occurs within the group (e.g., who seeks it; who is effective at it). In their chapter, Hales, Ren, and Williams contribute to our understanding of ostracism, an important topic in its own right, but also elaborate our understanding of conformity processes by showing exactly how normative pressure represents such a potent force in producing conformity effects. That is, Deutsch and Gerard (1955) argued for the role of normative pressure in producing conformity; Hales et al.'s work on ostracism identifies the source of this pressure.

Over the years, much has been made of the need for greater integration of personality and social psychology. Nezlek and Smith persuasively argue that the intersection of personality and social influence represents a place where such an integration could profitably take place. By bringing together work in a number of areas that rely on social inhibition processes (e.g., helping behavior, emotional expression), McCarty and Karau advance our understanding of social inhibition at



a conceptual level, as well as suggesting new avenues for research. Seitchik, Brown, and Harkins describe a model that not only provides the basis for understanding social facilitation effects but also may allow for the integration of work on the effect of threat on task performance in many other domains (social loafing, goal setting, intrinsic motivation/creativity, achievement goal theory, and stereotype threat).

The chapters also reveal a number of lacunae in the social influence literature. For example, in his chapter on social influence and clinical intervention, Heesacker argues that “the most important future direction in this area is refocusing the efforts of social influence scholars back onto clinical applications of social influence theory and research.” He notes that there is a wealth of basic research on the internalization process (e.g., elaboration likelihood model; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), but next to none in clinical settings. Instead, a clinician-developed approach to internalization, motivational interviewing, has generated a great deal of work. According to Heesacker, it would make a great deal (p. 435) of sense to pit accounts from basic research against the motivational interviewing account in clinical settings.

In their review of social influence and the law, Demaine and Cialdini note that a great deal of attention has been devoted to the study of social influence in the legal system (e.g., eye witness identification; pretrial publicity), but very little has been directed toward the study of the legal regulation of social influence in our everyday lives (e.g., deceptive advertising; corrective advertising; consent to search and seizure) or to the law as an instrument of social influence (e.g., the legitimacy of legal authority and the morality of law). Because, as Demaine and Cialdini argue, the striking difference in the amount of attention paid to the three areas is not a result of differences in the number of empirical questions in or in the importance of these areas of research, these relatively ignored areas provide fertile ground for future research.

These are examples of some of the many ways in which the chapters of the volume can contribute to a renaissance of interest in social influence. Of course, the term “renaissance” suggests a renewal of interest in the topic. There are also topics in social influence that have little, if any, past but hold great promise in the future. For example, in their chapter in this section, rather than asking how we

influence and are influenced by others, Sagarin and Henningsen ask how we resist influence from others. Unlike the other chapters, this chapter includes substantial input from research and theory on persuasion—in this case, resisting persuasion—primarily because there is surprisingly little literature on resisting social influence attempts aimed at eliciting behavioral responses. The authors acknowledge this gap and offer astute speculations as to how behavioral resistance might be similar to, or different from, attitudinal resistance, suggesting a number of areas for future research.

In a recent paper, Bohns (2016) describes another topic in social influence that has a promising future but little past: people's perceptions of their influence over others. She reports a series of experiments that show that people underestimate their ability to produce compliance with their requests, apparently because they fail to appreciate how difficult it is for the target of the influence attempt to refuse the request. She goes on to describe some factors that do (e.g., monetary incentives) and do not (e.g., request size) impact the underestimation-of-compliance effect.

Work on this underestimation process will be a welcome addition to the traditional focus of social influence research, but for the field to regain its prominence, it must also make a fundamental change. In the past, social influence research and applications have largely focused on face-to-face encounters. If not true already, we will soon enter a time in which people interact and influence each other through social media more than they do in person. There is a certain irony in the fact that the ebbing of interest in social influence was marked by the decline in the use of behavioral measures documented by Baumeister et al. (2007), but its renaissance may be characterized by more button-pushing, rather than a return to the behavioral measures of yesteryear. For example, major historical social actions have already occurred largely through the influence of social media (e.g., Arab Spring). As another example of the effects that can be produced by social media-mediated influence, as opposed to more traditional forms, the last chapter in this Handbook is a blog entry, "The Echo Chamber," by the singer, songwriter, author, and thinker David Byrne (formerly of the Talking Heads). Here Byrne engagingly spots important nuances that social media—Facebook, Instagram, Twitter—offer (or fail to offer) that significantly affect the process and direction of social media's special type of social influence. We could have peppered his blog with citations to

existing research that spoke to his insights, but we chose to leave his piece unaltered. We think readers will be intrigued by his ideas, whether they agree or disagree with them. We hope to challenge future social influence researchers and theorists to bring what they know from the past to bear on what we are witnessing now with the rapid evolution of social media, to take us into the 21st century of social influence.

We close with reflection and a call for action. In our experience teaching social psychology for over 40 years (each), we know of no other topic that has garnered as much interest and enthusiasm among students as the research included in this volume on social influence. Students love behavioral measures; they are captivated by the findings of clever field studies that show surprisingly powerful effects with subtle tactics, and years later, these are the studies they remember. The cognitive revolution, in conjunction with statistical analyses that purport to discover psychological process, retarded the development of research and theory on social influence because intrusive measures searching for (p. 436) mediators of effects are ill suited for this type of research. Perhaps also contributing to the decline of high-impact social influence research is the fact that these studies often required the carefully controlled creation of dramatic situations, reenacted over and over again by skilled actors, in order to capture the psychological essence of the phenomena being studied. These procedures are much more difficult and time consuming than paper-and-pencil (or computer) methodologies. Perhaps if we consider the fact that social influence in the future will largely occur online, then we can conceive of both realistic and meaningful experiments that also happen to allow for more efficient means of data collection. As we trust is obvious to our readers, there are many new and important avenues of exploration in this domain. We hope that this volume will contribute to a resurgence of interest in research and theory related to social influence.

## **RESEARCH IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY – THEORIES AND HYPHOTHESIS**

Social psychology is a highly empirical field. Rather than seeking global theories of human behavior, as are frequently found in personality theory, social psychologists utilize a wide range of specific theories for various kinds of social

and cognitive phenomena. Here is a sampling of some of the more influential theories that can be found in this branch of psychology.

Attribution Theory - is concerned with the ways in which people explain (or attribute) the behavior of others. The theory divides the way people attribute causes to events into two types. External or "situational" attributions assign causality to an outside factor, such as the weather. Internal or "dispositional" attributions assign causality to factors within the person, such as ability or personality.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory - was originally based on the concept of cognitive consistency, but is now more related to self-concept theory. When people do something that violates their view of themselves, this causes an uncomfortable state of dissonance that motivates a change in either attitudes or behavior (Festinger, 1957).

Elaboration Likelihood Model - maintains that information processing, often in the case of a persuasion attempt can be divided into two separate processes based on the "likelihood of cognitive elaborations," that is, whether people think critically about the content of a message, or respond to superficial aspects of the message and other immediate cues.

Evolutionary Psychology - suggests that human behavioral tendencies are at least partly inherited and have been influenced by the process of natural selection. One popular area of study is the possibility that human sex differences are due to differential reproductive strategies.

Schema Theory - focuses on "schemas" which are cognitive structures that organize knowledge and guide information processing. They take the form of generalized beliefs that can operate automatically and lead to biases in perception and memory.

Self-perception Theory - emphasizes that we observe ourselves in the same manner that we observe others, and draw conclusions about our likes and dislikes. Extrinsic self perceptions can lead to the overjustification effect.

Self-verification theory - focuses on people's desire to be known and understood by others. The key assumption is that once people develop firmly held beliefs about themselves, they come to prefer that others see them as they see themselves.

Social Comparison Theory - suggests that humans gain information about themselves, and make inferences that are relevant to self-esteem, by comparison to relevant others.

Social Exchange Theory - is an economic social theory that assumes human relationships are based on rational choice and cost-benefit analyses. If one partner's costs begin to outweigh his or her benefits, that person may leave the relationship, especially if there are good alternatives available.

Social Identity Theory - was developed by Henri Tajfel and examines how categorizing people (including oneself) into ingroups or outgroups affects perceptions, attitudes, and behavior.

Socioemotional Selectivity Theory - posits that as people age and their perceived time left in life decreases, they shift from focusing on information seeking goals to focusing on emotional goals.

Social Learning Theory - suggests that behavior can be acquired by observation and imitation of others, unlike traditional learning theories which require reinforcement or punishment for learning to occur.

Triangular theory of love - by Sternberg, characterizes love in an interpersonal relationship on three different scales: intimacy, passion, and commitment. Different stages and types of love can be categorized by different combinations of these three elements.

- **EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH**

Experimental research is undertaken when a researcher wishes to trace cause-and-effect relationships between defined variables. However, there are major constraints on causal inference in experimental research, and the type of experimental design chosen has a significant influence on the inferences that can be validly drawn from experimental results. Within the information field, experimental designs are much more common in information systems research than in library and information management research.

- **CORRELATION RESEARCH**

Correlational research is a type of non-experimental research method in which a researcher measures two variables, understands and assesses the statistical relationship between them with no influence from any extraneous variable.

Our minds can do some brilliant things. For example, it can memorize the jingle of a pizza truck. Louder the jingle, the closer the pizza truck is to us. Who taught us that? Nobody! We relied on our understanding and came to a conclusion. We don't stop there, do we? If there are multiple pizza trucks in the area and each one has a different jingle, we would memorize it all and relate the jingle to its pizza truck.

This is what correlational research precisely is, establishing a relationship between two variables, “jingle” and “distance of the truck” in this particular example. The correlational study is looking for variables that seem to interact with each other. When you see one variable changing, you have a fair idea of how the other variable will change.

### **Correlational research example**

The correlation coefficient shows the correlation between two variables (A correlation coefficient is a statistical measure that calculates the strength of the relationship between two variables), a value measured between -1 and +1. When the correlation coefficient is close to +1, there is a positive correlation between the two variables. If the value is close to -1, there is a negative correlation between the two variables. When the value is close to zero, then there is no relationship between the two variables.

Let us take an example to understand correlational research.

Consider hypothetically; a researcher is studying a correlation between cancer and marriage. In this study, there are two variables: disease and marriage. Let us say marriage has a negative association with cancer. This means that married people are less likely to develop cancer.

However, this doesn't necessarily mean that marriage directly avoids cancer. In correlational research, it is not possible to establish the fact, what causes what. It is a misconception that a correlational study involves two quantitative variables.

However, the reality is two variables are measured, but neither is changed. This is true independent of whether the variables are quantitative or categorical.

## **Types of correlational research**

Mainly three types of correlational research have been identified:

1. **Positive correlation:** A positive relationship between two variables is when an increase in one variable leads to a rise in the other variable. A decrease in one variable will see a reduction in the other variable. For example, the amount of money a person has might positively correlate with the number of cars the person owns.

2. **Negative correlation:** A negative correlation is quite literally the opposite of a positive relationship. If there is an increase in one variable, the second variable will show a decrease, and vice versa.

For example, being educated might negatively correlate with the crime rate when an increase in one variable leads to a decrease in another and vice versa. If the level of education in a country is improved, it can lower crime rates. Please note that this doesn't mean that lack of education leads to crimes. It only means that a lack of education and crime is believed to have a common reason – poverty.

3. **No correlation:** In this third type, there is no correlation between the two variables. A change in one variable may not necessarily see a difference in the other variable. For example, being a millionaire and happiness is not correlated. An increase in money doesn't lead to happiness.

## **Characteristics of correlational research**

Correlational research has three main characteristics. They are:

- **Non-experimental:** Correlational study is non-experimental. It means that researchers need not manipulate variables with a scientific methodology to either agree or disagree with a hypothesis. The researcher only measures and observes the relationship between the variables, without altering them or subjecting them to external conditioning.
- **Backward-looking:** Correlational research only looks back at historical data and observes events in the past. Researchers use it to measure and spot historical patterns between two variables. A correlational study may show a positive relationship between two variables, but this can change in the future.
- **Dynamic:** The patterns between two variables from correlational research are never constant and are always changing. Two variables having a negative correlation in the past can have a positive correlation relationship in the future due to various factors.

## **DATA COLLECTION IN CORRELATIONAL RESEARCH**

The distinctive feature of correlational research is that the researcher can't manipulate either of the variable involved. It doesn't matter how or where the variables are measured. A researcher could observe participants in a closed environment or a public setting.

**Researchers use two data collection methods to collect information in correlational research.**

- **Naturalistic observation**

Naturalistic observation is a way of data collection in which people's behavior is observed in their natural environment, in which they typically exist. This method is a type of field research. It could mean a researcher might be observing people in a grocery store, at the cinema, playground, or similar places.



Researchers who are usually involved in this type of data collection make observations as unobtrusively as possible so that the participants involved in the study are not aware that they are being observed else they might deviate from being their natural self.

Ethically this method is acceptable if the participants remain anonymous, and if the study is conducted in a public setting, a place where people would not normally expect complete privacy. As mentioned previously, taking an example of the grocery store where people can be observed while collecting an item from the aisle and putting in the shopping bags. This is ethically acceptable, and that is the reason most researchers choose public settings for recording their observations. This data collection method could be both qualitative or quantitative.

- **Archival data**

Another approach to correlational data is the use of archival data. Archival information is the data that has been previously collected by doing similar kinds of research. Archival data is usually made available through primary research.

In contrast to naturalistic observation, the information collected through archived data can be quite straightforward. For example, counting the number of people named Richard in the various states of America based on social security records is quite straightforward.