

Descriptive Approaches to Studying Behavior

- ***Naturalistic Observation:***
Observation of behavior in a natural setting over an extended period of time, using a variety of methods. Primarily qualitative rather than quantitative. May be participant or nonparticipant.
- ***Systematic Observation:***
Observation of one or more specific behaviors in a well-defined setting. Primarily quantitative. Requires a coding system for precise measurement of the variables.
- ***Case Study:***
Observation and description of a single case, usually an individual.
- ***Archival Research:***
Use of existing records to study behavior. May include statistical records, survey archives, and written documents available to researchers. Analysis of written documents requires *content analysis* using a coding system.
- ***Psychological Testing:***
Use of psychological tests to study psychological traits such as intelligence or extraversion.
- ***Survey Research:***
Administer a survey instrument to a sample of individuals drawn from a population.