

Controlling Variables

Psychology

The techniques for keeping an experiment interpretable.

Techniques and the problem each addresses.

Technique	Controls
Randomisation	Participant variables across conditions
Standardisation	Procedural differences between participants
Counterbalancing	Order effects
Single blind	Demand characteristics
Double blind	Experimenter bias as well
Control group	Effects of participation itself
Placebo	Expectancy effects

Demand characteristics: participants guess the aim and behave accordingly — either helpfully or deliberately unhelpfully.