

# Research Methods

Psychology

The main methods, and what each can and cannot establish.

*Method against what it supports.*

| Method             | Establishes       | Trade-off               |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Lab experiment     | Causation         | Low ecological validity |
| Field experiment   | Causation         | Less control            |
| Natural experiment | Causation, weakly | IV not manipulated      |
| Quasi-experiment   | Comparison        | No random allocation    |
| Correlation        | Association only  | No causal claim         |
| Observation        | Description       | Observer bias           |
| Case study         | Rich detail       | No generalisation       |
| Interview / survey | Self-report       | Social desirability     |

In a natural experiment the IV varies naturally; in a quasi-experiment it is a pre-existing participant characteristic.