


Unit One: Introducing Psychology

Part 5: Problems and Solutions in Research





Objectives:

1. Summarize the methodological hazards of doing research.
 2. Examine experimental procedures psychologists use to avoid bias.
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I. Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

- A. A self-fulfilling prophecy involves having expectations about a behavior and then acting in some manner, usually unknown, to carry out that behavior.

Example: Telling someone that you are going to give a person alcoholic beverages to see how their behavior changes when they drive. In many cases these people will begin driving erratically because they think they are drunk when they are not.

I. Self-Fulfilling Prophecies



II. Avoiding Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

- A. To avoid unknowingly influencing research results researchers use two methods to prevent self-fulfilling prophecies, these are single-blind and double-blind experiments.

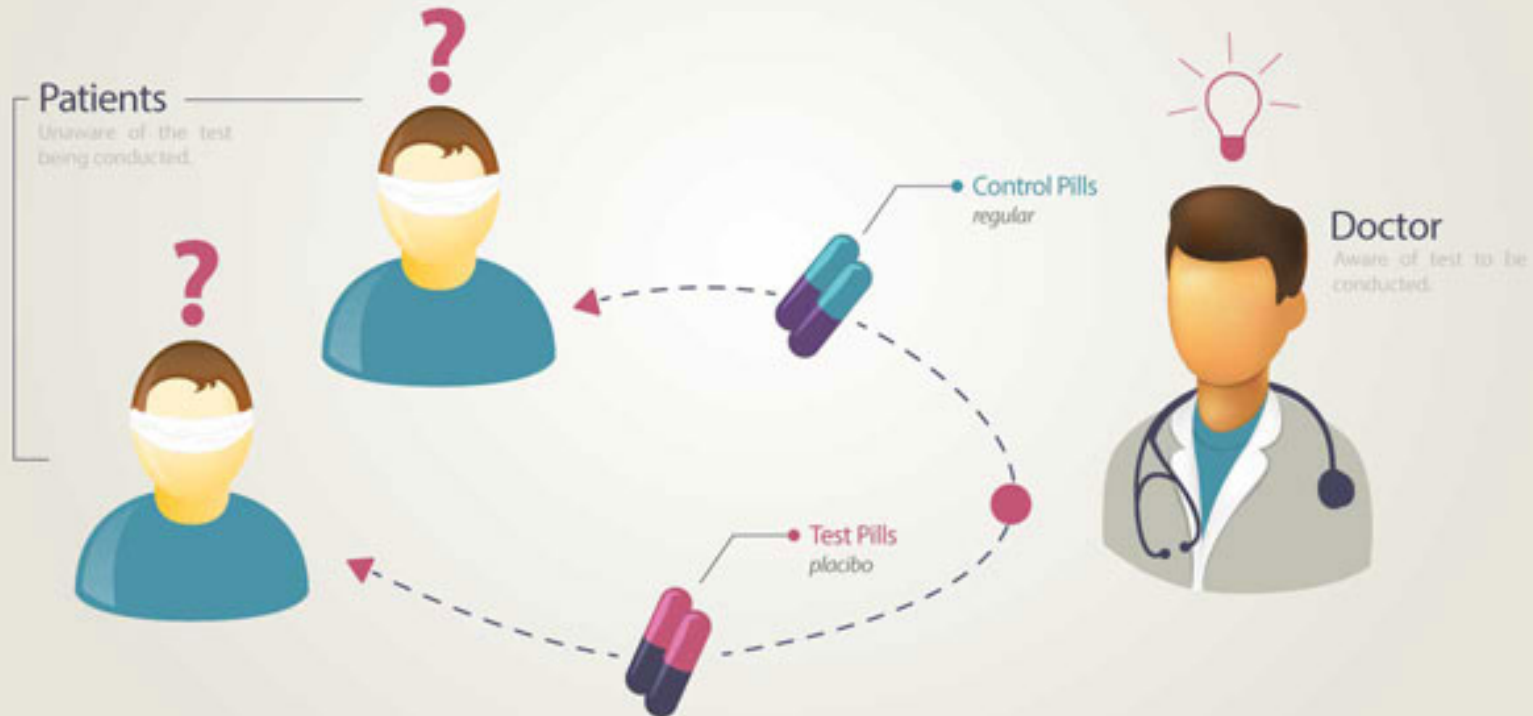
II. Avoiding Self-Fulfilling Prophecies (con't)

- B. **Single-blind** experiments are experiments in which the participants are unaware of which participants received a given treatment.

Example: Commonly used when testing new medical treatments. Participants receive either the treatment or a placebo but they are not told.

II. Avoiding Self-Fulfilling Prophecies (con't)

SINGLE BLIND

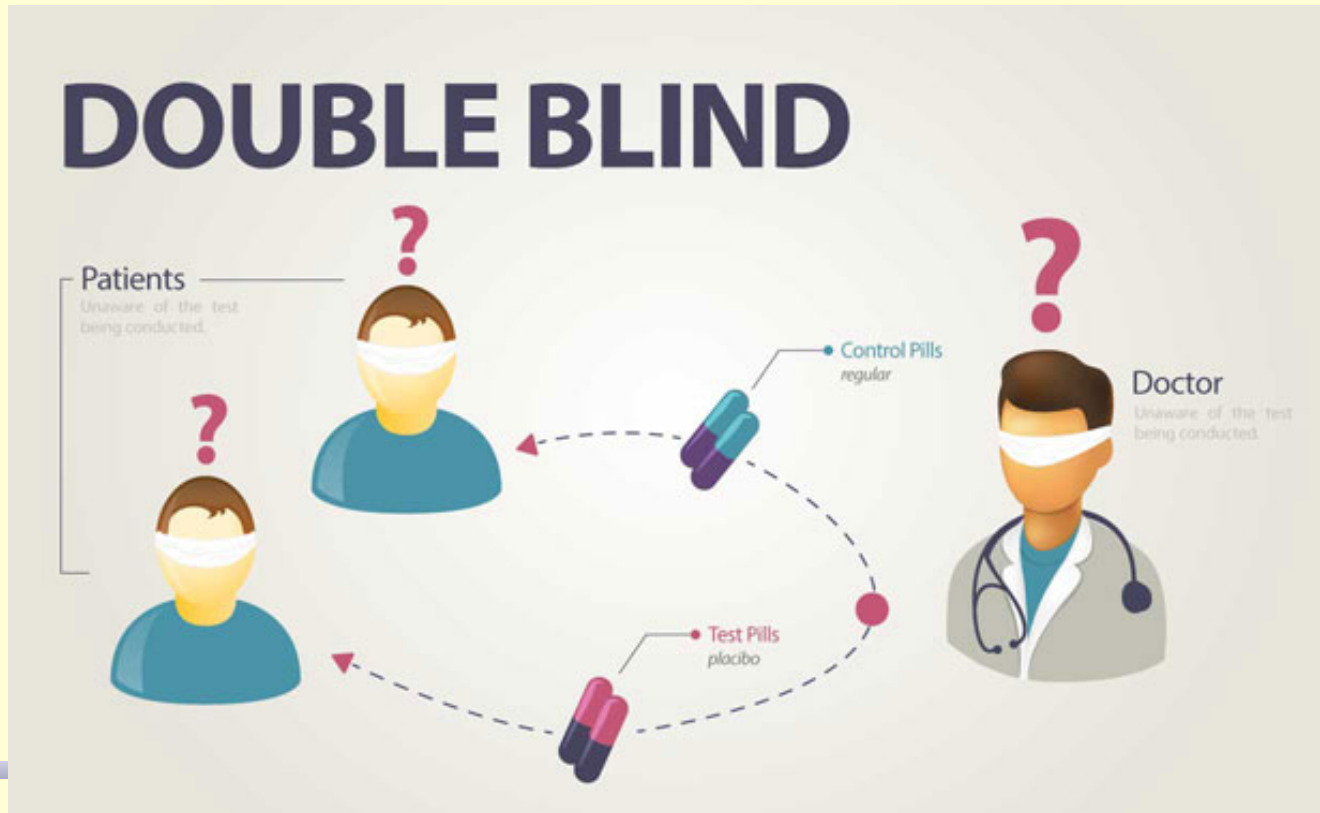


II. Avoiding Self-Fulfilling Prophecies (con't)

- C. A **double-blind** experiment is one in which neither the experimenter nor the participants know which participants received a given treatment.

Reasons for Use: It eliminates the possibility that the researcher will unconsciously find what they expect to find about the effects of a certain treatment.

II. Avoiding Self-Fulfilling Prophecies (con't)



III. The Milgram Experiment

- A. A famous single-blind experiment conducted in the 1960's by Stanley Milgram to determine how subjects would comply with authority figures.

2,000 participants were paid to give electrical shocks to another participant if an authority figure told them to do so.

III. The Milgram Experiment



III. The Milgram Experiment (con't)

B. Results:

62% of volunteers administered to the maximum severity shock when ordered by authority.

88% of Swarthmore College students would administer the most severe shock when ordered by authority.

III. The Milgram Experiment (Modern Replication – 2008)



III. The Milgram Experiment (con't)

C. Ethical Considerations:

1. How would you feel if you were one of the participants?
2. Did Milgram violate ethical conduct principles?
3. Was the deception Milgram used appropriate?
4. Did the information gained outweigh the deception?

IV. The Placebo Effect

- A. Placebos are commonly used in testing medications.
- B. The placebo effect is the change in a person's illness simply because of the patient's knowledge and/or perceptions of receiving a treatment.