

Evaluation Design: Matching Activity

Directions

Match each of the examples below with one of the four design categories:

- A. Descriptive design
- B. Correlational design
- C. Quasi-experimental design (QED)
- D. Randomized controlled trial (RCT)

Examples

1. A state education agency offers training to schools on positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) in an effort to decrease rates of student suspensions. Thirty schools volunteer and attend the training. These schools implement schoolwide PBIS systems the following year, with ongoing support from the state education agency. The agency wants to determine whether the training and subsequent implementation of schoolwide PBIS were successful. The agency compares the suspension rates of the 30 participating schools to 30 schools that did not participate but are statistically similar in racial/ethnic minority composition, socioeconomic status, and prior suspension rates.
2. A school district receives a free year subscription to an online program that provides curricular materials in literacy. After the free year has concluded, district leaders evaluate the program to determine whether to pay for a subscription. The leaders conduct a literature review to identify and summarize the results of previous studies of the program and similar programs. They also administer a survey to assess how frequently reading teachers used the materials over the past year as well as how the teachers perceive the value of the program. Finally, the leaders conduct a focus group with a small sample of teachers to discover how they incorporated the online literacy materials into classroom instruction.

3. State education agency administrators consider providing additional funding for school counselor positions. They examine school-level data on student-to-counselor ratios and find considerable variation across the state. The administrators want to determine how the availability of counselors is related to student behavioral outcomes. They find that schools with lower student-to-counselor ratios have higher rates of attendance and college-bound students. Even when they restrict their sample to only Title I schools, these relationships persist.
4. A large school district wins a grant to fund an elementary math intervention in 10 schools. The intervention provides after-school math tutors as well as professional development activities for math teachers in each of the participating schools. The district invites all of its elementary schools to apply for the funding. Twenty schools apply, so the district conducts a lottery to determine which 10 schools receive the intervention. After the intervention has been implemented, the district compares math achievement in the 10 schools that received the intervention to math achievement in the 10 schools that applied but were not chosen in the lottery.

Answer Key

1. C
2. A
3. B
4. D

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